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It is extremely difficult for Burmese people to get permission to travel abroad or to emigrate. Travel permits are required of Burmese citizens for travel within Burma. Permits and other favours can be obtained through corrupt officials, and black market corruption thrives at every level of Burmese society. Given the rather heavy-handed enforcement of a regulated society, the Burmese have been extremely ingenious in finding ways to "beat the system". Unlike the minority ethnic groups (including those that make up the Communist forces) who wage armed insurrection in the mountains, the ethnic Burmese have expressed their anti-government dissatisfactions through black market economic subversion and sporadic civil unrest, rather than political or military organizations.

Burma's totalitarian state under Ne Win is excused by some Western observers, who claim that Burma has always had authoritarian rulers and therefore such rule is appropriate for Burma. Certainly the Burmese kings were for the most part despots, and British rule was authoritarian, but since Independence, free elections were held (electing Aung San and U Nu). Furthermore, in the frontier areas, there were tribal democracies with elected chiefs, and the Shan system of aristocracy allowed villagers considerable say in their government. Some foreign observers claim that the Burmese are a happy nation simply because their basic material needs are met. This ignores the situation of crowded, decaying cities and severe rural poverty. Burma's people had 19% less rice to eat in 1981 than in 1938, and Burma's abundant natural resources have gone largely to waste. When a large section of Mandalay burned to the ground in a fire in 1984, no government funds were available for relief or rebuilding.

Burma, in its neutrality, has presented an image of peace and tranquility within turbulent Southeast Asia. This image somehow appeals to Western nostalgia for undeveloped societies: "Perhaps Burmese find more delight in living than many others have found in the electronic global village

around them, with its modern freedoms and social rights."* Such nostalgia is a sad delusion. The Burmese are intelligent people, and are well aware of what they have been missing, both in terms of material well-being and of freedom. The outside world should shed its comfortable image of "tranquil" Burma, and be aware of Burma's current situation: an aging dictator, a decayed economy, a powerful insurgency. Power in Burma lies in the hands of one man, Ne Win. Without him (when he dies or is deposed) there will be a power vacuum that may be filled in any of a variety of ways: Communism (China or Soviet aligned, or independent), modernization as in China after Mao, continued military domination (of leftist or rightist factions), a Thai-style "democracy" with capitalism and free speech, a Singapore-style authoritarian capitalist state, a dramatic increase in the power of minority frontier states, secession of minority frontier states, domestic anarchy of warring factions, wars and disputes with neighboring countries, etc. With these alternatives on the horizon, the present political situation in Burma, especially the insurgency on Burma's frontiers, must not be ignored by the outside world.

* Burma, A Country Study, American University/U.S. Government, 1983

THE INSURGENTS

Of Burma's 40 million population, about 15 million are not ethnically Burmese. This includes Indian and Chinese minorities, and the many ethnic groups of the frontier areas. Many ethnic groups of the frontier areas have formed insurgent armies in rebellion against the Burmese government. These rebel armies and allied political groups have a variety of aims ranging from total independence of their territory to the establishment of a federation of autonomous states. Their reasons include suppression of religion, language and culture; the imposition of the Socialist economic system; government and military human rights violations; the right to secession granted in the first Constitution; pre-Colonial territorial claims; and government intention to "exterminate" minority ethnic groups. In many cases, grievances arose because the government was fighting the insurgents in the ethnic minority areas, with government/military abuses provoking local support for the insurgency, rather than suppressing it.

Besides the ethnic rebels, there are groups such as the Communists and KMT who fight the Burmese for political/economic reasons. The ethnic rebels, with Communist and KMT forces, are in control of about one third of what the map shows as "Burma". The central plain, the cities and most of the coastline belong to the Burmese government; while the mountains and jungle along almost the entire border are rebel territory.

The insurgent groups are all opposed to the Burmese government, although there are rumors of collaboration by various factions, and some are engaged in heavier combat than others. Deep ideological differences, disputes over trade and territory, and poor communications have led to constant friction among the insurgent groups themselves. Efforts to unite the insurgent groups have so far met with only limited success. The following section profiles the main groups involved in the insurgency.

Karen-- A strong sense of oppression by the Burmese is ingrained in Karen culture. In pre-Colonial times, the Karen were largely exploited and enslaved by the Burmese, Mon and other groups. Their mythology prophesized deliverance at the hands of white people. Many Karen became enthusiastic converts to Christianity, and today the Karen elite are mainly Christian, although the majority of Karen in Burma and Thailand are Buddhist or animist. The Karen are at all levels of development from primitive "hill tribes" to sophisticated British-educated doctors, teachers, and guerilla leaders. The Karen ethnic group is known for traits of honesty, morality and hospitality.

Mission-educated political activists began the Karen independence movement, which at first sought British protection from the perceived threat of an independent Burma. The first rebellion was strong in the 1950's, but was defeated by the Burmese. This resulted in many Karen being driven from their traditional homes in the Irrawaddy delta area, into the spine of mountains along the Thailand border (Tenasserim Division). The rebels, based along the Thailand border, are usually the insurgent group hardest hit by the Burmese Army. There has been considerable abuse of Karen civilian villagers by the Burmese Army.

The Karen rebellion has continued for 37 years. There are instances of three generations of Karen men fighting in the rebellion. Karen leadership has tended to depend on "British-style" tactics, while younger Karen soldiers would prefer more guerilla warfare and sabotage. The Karen were well and heavily armed during a period of prosperity from trade in smuggled tin and teak. Since the prices of these commodities have plummeted, and Karen trading posts have been hit hard militarily, the Karen economy had been in a severe depression during the mid-80's. The Karen are not in an opium producing area, and forbid all trade in narcotics in their area. Their leadership (General Bo Mya, elected officials) is strongly anti-Communist and pro-West. The Karen formed an alliance of rebel political organizations, representing several different ethnic groups, called the National Democratic Front. There has been considerable friction between the N.D.F. and non-member insurgent groups. Recently, the N.D.F.

MIRANTE



Karen: KNLA patrol, Three Pagodas Pass

MIRANTE



Mon: MLA officers, Three Pagodas Pass

forged a "united front" agreement with the Burma Communist Party. The N.D.F. had previously been rigidly anti-Communist.

As the Karen have been fighting for so long, they are highly politically organized. Their nation, Kawthoolei, holds elections and provides health care and schools throughout their rebel territory. The last few years' heavy fighting has caused more than 17,000 Karen and Mon refugees to be forced across the border into Thailand. In camps there, the refugees are helped by Kawthoolei personnel, as they are eligible for very little aid from the outside world. If the Karen are completely defeated by the Burmese Army, and driven out of Burma into Thailand, it is thought that they will resort to large-scale terrorism against Burma. So far, there have been scattered Karen acts of sabotage in Burma, mainly on railroad lines, and a few bombing attempts in Rangoon. Helicopters, given to the Burmese government by the U.S. for use in drug suppression, have instead been used against the Karen. Karen insurgents succeeded in shooting down at least two of the helicopters, however, and their use has been curtailed.

There are about 3 million Karen in Burma. Their army (Karen National Liberation Army) has from 5,000 to 8,000 soldiers. Their political organization (Karen National Union) has federation as its goal.

Mon-- The Mon are fighting to regain their ancient, lost civilization. The Mon, who are Buddhist, live in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam as well as Burma. Most of the Mon in Burma are considered completely assimilated into Burmese culture. The Mon insurgents are headquartered near Three Pagodas Pass, on the Thailand border. They are aligned with the Karen insurgents and use the same smuggling trade routes. There are two factions of Mon insurgents, both known as the New Mon State Party, led by Nai Schwe Kyan and Nai Non Hla. There are about 1.3 million Mon in Burma. The Mon rebel armies number about 800 troops, in total. Their goal is federation.

Karenni-- The Karenni, an ethnic group related to the Karen, have a long history as an independent state. The Karenni were granted protectorate status by the British, and thus never became part of the colony of Burma. The Karenni attempted to secede from Burma according to the Constitution's 10-year clause, and revolted when the right was denied them. The Karenni State is small, but potentially rich in minerals, gems and hydroelectric power. The Karenni elite is pro-British, Roman Catholic, and anti-Communist. The Karenni soldiers are good guerilla fighters, but poorly armed. The Karenni are not well-off financially. There are about 75,000 Karenni in Burma. The insurgents' political organization is the Karenni National Progress Party (Party President Mr. Mawreh, Council President Mr. Plya Reh). The Karenni Liberation Army has about 600 regular army and 500 militia. The Karenni goal is independence.

Shan-- The Shan are Tai-speaking people, related to the Thai of Thailand, the Dai of Yunnan, the Lao and other Southeast Asian ethnic groups. The Shan insurgents identify strongly with Thailand, and revere the King of Thailand. Traditionally, the Shans were governed by hereditary princes called "sawbwas", with 34 sawbwas governing autonomously in the Shan State. The Shans live primarily in the valleys of the Shan Plateau and northern Burma. In traditional Shan society, land was owned by the aristocracy. Shans engaged in trade and farming. The Shan are Buddhist, with magic and astrology adapted to Buddhist practices. During the Colonial period, the Shan aristocracy negotiated protectorate or indirect rule agreements with the British. Conflicts amongst the Shan sawbwas were frequent. The Shan elite was well-educated. Shan culture-- especially literature, architecture and dance-- is highly sophisticated and influenced other Southeast Asian cultures. The Shan traditionally placed a high value on personal freedom.

Inclusion in a Burmese-dominated nation was viewed by many Shans as a threat to their traditional independence and culture. Since Ne Win's taking power in Burma, use of Shan language and literature has been

discouraged by the government, and education is geared towards adaptation to a more "Burmese" national identity. A significant form of Shan resistance to the Burmese government involved underground teaching of the Shan written language. In the late 1950's, Shan leaders who were dissatisfied with the state of The Union of Burma called for secession. The first Shan insurgent groups were formed, led by members of the aristocracy and Shan students. Severe factionalism divided the Shan insurgency from the outset. Ne Win's takeover of Burma and suppression of Shan autonomy encouraged widespread rebellion in the Shan State during the 1960's. KMT (Chinese Nationalist) military groups had settled in the Shan State and were involved in the production and trade of opium. Burmese economic failure spread to the Shan State and Shan farmers took up the growing of opium, which had previously been grown only by "hill tribes" such as the Lisu, Lahu and Wa. Shan rebel groups began to resort to the transport and tax of opium in order to buy arms.

During the 1970's the Shan insurgent groups grew powerful, but remained divided. The Burmese government convinced several Shan State rebel leaders to join an anti-insurgent militia (Ka Kwe Ye). KKY membership turned out to be a ruse to engage in the opium trade, and private "warlord" narcotics armies flourished. In 1972, Shan insurgent groups involved in the opium trade stated their desire to end the narcotics trade. They offered to sell 400 tons of opium to the U.S. Government for about 20 million dollars. This would have removed a year's crop from the market and disrupted the narcotics trade at a price considerably less than the U.S. was spending on drug suppression in the area. The offer was rejected.

In the 80's, three main Shan insurgent groups had emerged. There was the Shan State Army, led by Sao Hso Lane. The SSA was a member of the anti-Communist NDF, but had Communist alliances as well. Another group, the Shan United Revolutionary Army, led by Mo Heing (a.k.a. Korn Jerng), was anti-Communist and allied with KMT forces. The third group, the Shan United Army, led by Khun Sa (a.k.a. Chan Shee-fu) was a former KKY narcotics trade army. All three groups were involved in the drug trade to

varying degrees. The SSA and SURA were primarily political groups, with Shan nationalist goals. With SUA, the drug trade appeared to take precedence over politics.

In 1984, the SSA split apart, and much of the SSA joined with SURA to form a new organization called the Tailand Revolutionary Council (with Tailand Revolutionary Army as its military organization). The TRC declared itself against the drug trade, which led to conflicts with SURA's old KMT allies. The KMT employed soldiers from the Wa National Army, an NDF member organization, so NDF and TRC forces were engaged in battles against each other. In 1985, Khun Sa's SUA joined the TRC. This damaged the TRC's anti-drug image, as Khun Sa was an internationally notorious figure in the narcotics trade, but for the first time the Shan insurgents were able to present a unified front. During 1986, disputes between the TRC and NDF have continued. The NDF accuses the TRC of being narcotics traders, and the TRC accuses the NDF of being allied with the Communists. Both accusations have some truth to them. While the leadership of the TRC (Mo Heing of SURA is Prime Minister) appears to want an end to the drug trade, in reality there are at present few alternatives to the growing of opium in the area. The TRC would like to work with U.S. and Thailand agencies to find such alternatives, but such cooperation is made difficult by U.S. and Thailand's relations with Burma. The NDF has recently made a "united front" agreement with the Burma Communist Party, to fight against the Burmese Government. This may affect the TRC, who are continually at war with the BCP in the Shan State. Most TRC battles have been fought against KMT or BCP forces, in recent years. Sometimes the TRC has fought combined KMT and BCP forces, as the KMT and BCP cooperate in the narcotics trade.

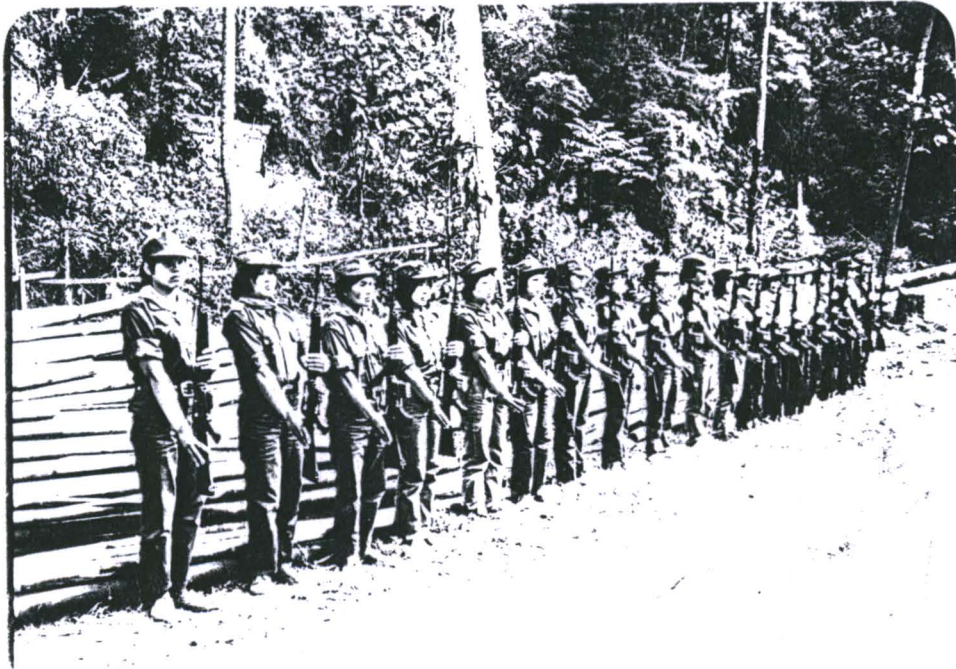
There are about 3.2 million Shans in Burma. The Tailand Revolutionary Army has upwards of 8,000 troops. The goal of the Tailand Revolutionary Council is independence for the Shan State.

MIRANTE



Kachin: KIA commando

T.R.A.



Shan: TRA female combat troops

Pa-O-- The Pa-O are an ethnic group related to the Karen. The Pa-O National Organization is a member of the NDF. There has also been some Communist influence among the Pa-O. The Pa-O have had territorial conflicts with Khun Sa's SUA. The PNO has a few hundred troops. The PNO has the NDF goal of a federation, but other Pa-O insurgents are allied with the TRC in favor of being part of an independent Shan State.

Paluang-- The Paluang are related to the Mon, and are known for their tea cultivation in the hills of the Shan State. They are Buddhist and their social structure is similar to that of the Shan. They had good relations with the British in the Colonial period. There are some 60,000 Paluang in Burma. The Paluang State Liberation Organization is a member of the NDF, with less than 100 soldiers. Other Paluang insurgents belong to the TRC.

Paduang-- The Paduang call themselves "Kayah", and are related to the Mon. They are known for their women's brass neck-rings, which create the effect of an elongated neck. Some Paduang are soldiers in the Karenni Liberation Army. There are about 7,000 Paduang in Burma.

Lisu, Lahu, other hill tribes-- Nomadic tribes such as the Lisu, Lahu and Akha live in the mountains of Yunnan, Laos, Thailand and northern Burma. They practice shifting "slash and burn" cultivation of rice and often grow opium poppies. The opium grown by these tribes in Burma is the largest opium crop in the world, over 600 tons in 1984. The tribes are dependent on the sale of opium for goods such as medicine, clothing, salt and blankets. Thailand has had a great deal of success in providing the tribes with substitute crops, but no such programs exist in Burma. Hill tribes in the north of Burma have been adversely affected by the spraying of 2,4-D herbicide on their land by the Burmese government. This herbicide was provided to the Burmese by the U.S. for opium eradication, but is affecting the tribes' rice and vegetable fields and animals, as well. The herbicide 2,4-D was a component in the Agent Orange used in Vietnam, and is thought to be dangerous to humans. Hill tribe soldiers fight in several insurgent armies, including the BCP, TRC and KMT forces.

Wa-- The Wa, related to the Mon, were among the earliest inhabitants of northern Burma. Wa also live in the mountains of Yunnan. The Wa have traditionally been headhunters, with limited contact with the outside world. They lived in fortified villages, constantly at war with each other, and grew rice and opium. The Wa are perhaps the least developed, poorest and least educated ethnic group in both Burma and Yunnan. Wa soldiers have been heavily recruited as mercenaries by the BCP. In recent years, Wa soldiers have also served as KMT forces. A former KKY member, Maha Sang, is the leader of the Wa National Organization, which is an NDF member. The WNO troops are allied with KMT forces, and have been fighting against the TRC. There are about 30,000 Wa in Burma and Yunnan. The WNO's Wa National Army has about 500 troops.

Kachin-- The Kachin live in the mountains of Burma's north. Most Kachin are animists, with an educated Christian elite. The Kachin first resisted British intrusion into their territory, then became the mainstay of the British military forces in Burma. Kachin guerilla soldiers distinguished themselves on the Allied side in World War II. Kachin World War II veterans formed the first Kachin rebel groups. The Kachin Independence Organization was formed in 1959, and grew in strength after Ne Win's takeover of Burma and the loss of the Kachin State's autonomy. The KIO grew to control large sections of the Kachin State, supported by smuggling trade in precious metals, gems, and jade. The KIO also profitted from trade in opium. While KIO leadership was largely Christian and anti-Communist, the KIO maintained an alliance with the BCP and was able to receive Chinese arms. The BCP alliance was often strained, as was the KIO's membership in the NDF.

The Kachin State, although remote and undeveloped, has abundant resources such as gems and jade, which the Burmese government hopes to exploit. Fighting between the Burmese Army and KIO (military force is the Kachin Independence Army) has been constant. The KIA uses

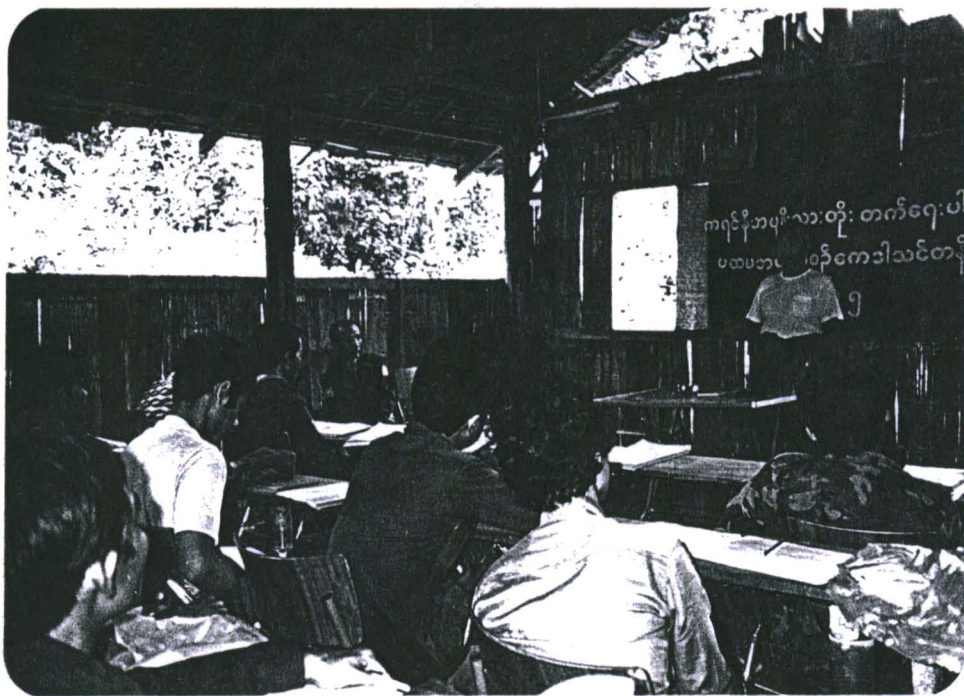
skillful guerilla tactics and sabotage to keep the Burmese Army from its territory. The Burmese Army has launched major attacks on KIO territory during the first months of 1986.

The KIO has stated that its goal is independence for the Kachin State, which they called "Kachinland", and claimed a 2.5 million population for Kachinland (including Kachin-related and non-Kachin tribes in the area). The sporadic alliance with the BCP, and NDF membership have caused the KIO to sometimes downplay the call for independence and state its goal as federation instead. The KIA has upwards of 8,000 troops.

Naga-- Most Naga live in the Nagaland state of India. The Naga have been fighting a long-running insurgency against India. Naga insurgents also oppose the Burmese government. There are about 50,000 Naga living in the mountains of northwest Burma. Many Naga are Christian. The Naga have been known as headhunters and warriors. The Naga insurgent elite is said to be Baptist, British educated, and trained by China. The Naga insurgents have alliances with the Kachin insurgents and possibly with the BCP. There are perhaps 2,000 Naga insurgent troops in Burma, fighting both Burma and India. Burma has cooperated with India in India's campaigns to suppress the insurgency in the Nagaland State.

Chin-- The Chin live in remote mountain areas of western Burma, and in India and Bangladesh. Many Chin served as soldiers for the British during the Colonial period. The Chin State is extremely underdeveloped. Attempts to organize a politicized insurgency there have been largely unsuccessful. There are about 350,000 Chin in Burma.

MIRANTE



Karenni: KNPP President Mawreh addressing KLA officers

MIRANTE



Arakanese: Arakanese soldiers in training camp

Arakanese-- There has been great traditional animosity between the Arakanese and Burmese. Arakan is geographically isolated from Burma, and has been influenced by trade with India and Bangladesh. Most Arakanese are Buddhist but there is a substantial Moslem population. There is considerable smuggling trade from Arakan to Bangladesh, of Thai and Chinese goods smuggled through Burma, and rice from Arakan. During the 1970's, Moslem resistance groups allied with Bangladesh appeared in Arakan. Detention and jailing of Moslem Arakanese by the Burmese government has been frequent, for lack of proof of citizenship or residency. A Burmese Army attempt to register Arakanese Moslems sent 200,000 across the border to Bangladesh in 1978. These refugees were subsequently repatriated to Arakan, but Burmese citizenship laws continue to discriminate against Arakanese Moslems, who are generally assumed to be illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, even though they were born in Arakan.

Both Moslem and Communist-backed rebel groups have tried to organize in Arakan, but the insurgent groups there have been defeated by the Burmese Army. Some Arakanese insurgent groups have travelled to rebel areas on the Thailand border. The Arakan Liberation Party is a member of the NDF, and other small Arakanese insurgent groups are allied with the NDF and aided by the Karen. Some Arakanese rebels have been involved in anti-government plots and sabotage in Rangoon. An organization called the Kawthoolei Moslem Army is part of the Karen National Union, and its soldiers are Moslems of mixed Karen and "Pakistani" (Bengali Moslem) ancestry.

Communists-- The Communist forces are possibly the most powerful of all the insurgent groups, at present. The early Communist factions that broke away from the Burmese government shortly after Independence, were known as the "White Flag" and "Red Flag" parties. The Red Flag Communists were ultra-radical and considered Krushchev "a revisionist" and Mao Zedong "an opportunist". Without support from either the Soviets or the Chinese, the Red Flag lost influence to the White Flag Communists.

The White Flag faction, calling itself the Burma Communist Party, staged some successful uprisings in the early 1950's, and nearly captured Rangoon. On the brink of forcing the Burmese Government to surrender to them, the White Flag Communists were forced back by Ne Win's Army, which then had the cooperation of the anti-Communist Karen rebels. The BCP was driven up into the mountains of the Shan State near the Chinese border. Communist China began to arm, train and support them. China recruited a Kachin insurgent leader to head the BCP during the late 60's. During the 70's, the BCP came to include remnants of both the Red Flag and White Flag factions, as well as the Chinese-backed Kachin Communist faction. Alliances were formed with ethnic insurgent groups such as the SSA and the KIO. Thakin Ba Thein Tin, a Burmese Communist leader who had been living in Beijing, became Chairman of the BCP.

In 1981 both the BCP and KIO entered negotiations with the Burmese government. In both cases the negotiations were unsuccessful and the insurgency resumed. BCP relations with China deteriorated in the 80's. Relations between Burma and China have become much warmer in recent years, with China recognizing the BSPP as the legitimate power in Burma, rather than the BCP. In order to ingratiate itself with Southeast Asian nations and secure their support against Vietnam, China had pledged to end support for insurgent movements in Southeast Asia. China began contributing aid projects to Burma, and Chinese supply lines to the BCP dried up, although some observers think that China continues to feed the insurgency by arming KIO forces.

When China cut aid to the BCP, the BCP plunged into the narcotics trade and became more powerful than ever. The BCP is presently one of the world's largest and best-financed Communist insurgencies. The BCP has from 13,000 to 15,000 troops operating in northern/northeastern Burma. Most BCP troops are ethnic Chinese, Shan, Wa or other hill tribes. BCP ideology, which had been rigidly Maoist through the 60's and 70's, has become remarkably "watered down" in the past few years. Rather than turn to Soviet-allied Communist forces in neighboring Laos, the BCP, cut off by China, has become what one observer called "essentially a drug operation with a gloss of ideology."* The BCP is known to cooperate with KMT forces on narcotics production and transport. Recently the BCP made a "united front" agreement with the avowedly anti-Communist NDF. In an October 1985 statement, the BCP "renounced the idea of a one-party system of government and... is willing to accept... 'freedom and democracy.' "** During the past few years there has been considerable conflict between BCP forces engaged in the drug trade and TRC forces attempting to control the entire border between the Shan State and Thailand.

KMT (Chinese Nationalists/Chinese Irregular Forces)-- In the early 1950's, thousands of Chinese Nationalist troops fled the Communist takeover in Yunnan, and settled in the Shan State. There, they recruited soldiers from local Wa, Shan and hilltribe populations. They received support from Taiwan, Thailand, and the U.S. as an anti-Communist force. Burmese military efforts to oust them only led to more insurrection on the part of the Shan, and entrenchment on the part of the KMT. The KMT had immediately seen the potential of the area as an opium producing region. The KMT encouraged opium growing, organized purchase and transport of raw opium, refined opium into heroin, and sold their opium and heroin to Chinese syndicate connections in Thailand and elsewhere in Asia. KMT groups also engaged in these practices in Laos and northern Thailand. Their presence in northern Thailand was tolerated because they were an anti-Communist force.

* Asiaweek, August 16, 1985, "Rangoon in Front", Anthony Davis

** Far Eastern Economic Review, May 22, 1986, "A Gathering of Rebels" Lintner

In 1984 through 1986, the KMT groups have been troubled by former allies: Thailand and the Shan. KMT-linked narcotics corruption riddles Thai society. Thai military, police, government and business people have been known to cooperate with the KMT in the transport and sale of narcotics. Recently, however, Thailand has made attempts to bring the KMT under control. KMT villagers in Thailand have been encouraged to become Thai citizens and send their children to Thai rather than Chinese schools. Thai military and police raids have been conducted against gambling, gun-running and drug operations in KMT villages in Thailand. While the major KMT narcotics dealers continue to operate, they cannot do so as blatantly and freely as they had in the past.

For many years, KMT forces in the Shan State near the Thailand border had a close alliance with the Shan insurgent group SURA. In 1984, SURA joined with part of another Shan group, SSA, to form the Thailand Revolutionary Council. The TRC took an anti-narcotics stance, and a rift between TRC ^{and KMT} grew into open conflict. The TRC accused the KMT of collaborating with the Burma Communist Party on narcotics transport, a seemingly bizarre idea that turned out to have basis in fact. The KMT and BCP had shed ideology for the profits of the narcotics trade. When the KMT forces rejected appeals to join the Shan-led TRC, the TRC then approached Khun Sa's Shan United Army. The SUA had been a bitter rival of the KMT in the Shan State drug trade, and joined the TRC in 1985. A drug war between the Shans and KMT was effectively declared. KMT use of troops from the Wa National Army (an NDF member) drew the NDF into the conflict against the Shan forces. The NDF, led by the vehemently anti-narcotics **Karen**, was in the position of defending one drug-running operation (the KMT) against another (Khun Sa's forces in the TRC).

KMT forces are based near the Thailand border and in Thailand itself. The main forces are the Third Army (led by Gen. Li Wen-huan) and

the Fifth Army (led by Gen. Lei Yu-tien). Both armies are "descended from" the Nationalist Chinese 93rd Army, and are often called "the 93rd." Gen. Li is old and in ill-health, and there have been several attempts to assassinate him. As well as his conflict with the Shan, he has rivals within the KMT. Financial backers and business partners of the KMT (such as the Wei brothers, Chang Tzu Tung, Ho Ching Tsao, etc.) live in northern Thailand.

NARCOTICS AND THE INSURGENCY

For several of the insurgent groups fighting the Burmese government, trade in opium and its refined form, heroin, have been a major source of income. General Tuan Shi-wen of the KMT Fifth Army summed up the situation: "To fight you must have an army, and an army must have guns, and to buy guns you must have money. In these mountains the only money is opium."* The narcotics trade was so profitable that many groups that turned to it to finance their political goals ended up discarding their political ideals and becoming efficient, criminal profit-making organizations. The KMT forces went from being an anti-Communist army to being a ruthless drug syndicate that cooperates with Communists on drug transport. SURA was corrupted by KMT allies into a dependency on revenue from taxation of drug caravans. SUA's leader, Khun Sa, started out as a Shan nationalist rebel, collaborated with the Burmese government's Ka Kwe Ye militia, used the KKY to commence dealing in opium, was arrested by the Burmese, escaped, fought the KMT for narcotics territory, established a formidable narcotics-running army based in northern Thailand, was defeated by the Thai Army, formed another army in the Shan State, came to control a large share of the drug trade in the Shan State, joined the TRC (which has an anti-narcotics stance), and continues to fight the KMT for territory. The Shan State Army's various factions, and the Kachin Independence Army have been involved in the transport of narcotics. The Burma Communist Party turned to the drug trade when its aid from China was cut off, and has been extremely successful in the business, losing much of its political posture in the process.

The impoverished hill tribes of northern Burma are completely dependent on opium as their only cash crop. The opium is grown in remote areas where government or international anti-narcotics programs do not reach. The Burmese government faces severe economic problems, potential civil unrest in urban areas and insurgency in frontier areas. The control of the drug trade is not really the government's highest

* Inside Asia, Sept.-Oct. 1985, "Politics of Opium", Martin Smith

priority. It is doubtful that the Burmese government could do very much about opium production in the north, because most of the opium is grown in rebel-controlled areas, and most of the rebels are engaged in the drug trade.

Many observers feel that the drug trade from northern Burma has been allowed to grow to its current scale (the largest opium crop in the world, 600 tons in 1984, accounting for 20% of the heroin in the U.S.) due to massive corruption in Burma, Thailand, and U.S. anti-narcotics agencies. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency has met with minimal success in trying to discourage opium/heroin production in northern Burma. The DEA has suffered from lack of access to the growing areas and lack of information about the situation there. In February 1986, the U.S. State Department's annual report on world narcotics production was presented to the U.S. Congress, to "be used to determine whether foreign assistance should be reduced to countries that do not make significant efforts to cut narcotics production. Last year's report set crop reduction goals for all the major drug producing countries that export to the United States. The targets were set in consultation with the foreign governments, but the new report shows that only Burma and Jamaica met their goals, while Colombia met the goal for marijuana but not for coca. Burma, the world's largest producer of opium poppy, reduced its crop below the State Department target largely because of poor weather, although in the last year Burma has also begun eradicating opium poppy."* This report contradicts reports of observers in northern Thailand and northern Burma who report that poppy growing weather last year was excellent and another massive 600 ton crop was in production.

While the Thai government has had great success with crop substitution programs that provide cash crop alternatives to Thailand's hill tribe poppy growers, no such programs are available in northern Burma. Efforts to stanch the flow of narcotics from Burma have centered on eradication projects. Between 1974 and 1983, U.S. anti-narcotics aid to Burma

*The New York Times, February 21, 1986, "U.S. Finds Mexico Exports Most Heroin and Marijuana", Joel Brinkley

totalled \$47 million, and included eighteen Bell helicopters and several transport planes. The helicopters were used against Karen insurgents who are not involved in the narcotics trade and live in the south of Burma, far from the narcotics producing areas. Two of the helicopters were shot down by the Karen. In 1977 such aid was questioned in the U.S. Congress, in light of the Carter Administration's human rights policies.*

Since 1981, an increasing number of Burmese military officers have been brought to the U.S. for training in "crop eradication missions", i.e. crop dusting with herbicides. The herbicide which the U.S. has been providing to the Burmese government since 1984 is 2,4-D. 2,4-D is an extremely hazardous chemical, highly toxic to animals and humans. Most forms of 2,4-D are contaminated with dioxins. 2,4-D was a component of Agent Orange herbicide used in Vietnam.

According to many observers in northern Burma, the Burmese government's use of 2,4-D is by no means confined to poppy fields. Many of the major poppy growing areas are protected by insurgent forces which have machine guns and other artillery easily capable of shooting down crop dusting planes. In less protected areas of the Shan State, the Burmese government's use of 2,4-D has had disastrous effects, however. Aerial spraying causes the herbicide to disperse. Poppies are grown in small plots mixed in with the upland rice that is the hill tribes' main food supply. According to a Shan observer:

"The northern and the eastern parts of the Shan State have been terribly affected by this 2,4-D: 1. Spoiling arable land into soil unfit for cultivation and animal-keeping 2. Spoiling the water sources and drainage system 3. Causing people to get sick and nauseated 4. Animals were affected and suffered premature deaths. Reports keep coming in."

*See "Hearings before the Select Committee" July 12 and 13, 1977, Washington

Alliances of Shan insurgents have made offers to sell the entire opium crop under their control to the U.S. government. The government could destroy the opium or use it for medical purposes. The first of two such offers took place in 1973, when about 400 tons of opium were offered at a price of about 27 million dollars. The offer was largely motivated by the Shan's desire to make the outside world aware of them as something more than narcotics dealers. They offered to let international anti-narcotics agencies visit their territory. At that time U.S. anti-drug expenditures were estimated at 27 billion dollars a year. Not wishing to appear to support a rebel group against the Burmese government, the U.S. government rejected the offer.

A similar offer was made in 1975. The main points of the Shan insurgent alliance's proposal to the U.S. were as follows:

1. The signatories will sell the annual Shan opium crop at the Thai border price to any recognized international or governmental body.
2. The signatories will cooperate with the purchaser to prevent opium grown in the Shan State being marketed by parties not subject to the terms of this agreement.
3. The signatories will permit inspection inside Shan State.
4. The signatories will assist and participate in any economic, agricultural or sociological research aimed at replacing opium with alternative crops." *

This offer was rejected as well, as the U.S. felt that it would jeopardize relations with Burma, be difficult to enforce, and possibly lead to increased production.

The Thailand Revolutionary Council has united the main Shan insurgent groups during 1984-85, and has declared itself committed to ending the narcotics trade in the Shan State. Members of the TRC have accounted for a major share of that trade. Their rivals in the trade are the KMT forces and the Burma Communist Party. The TRC anti-narcotics stance

*Journal of the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, March 1984, "The Shans and the Shan State of Burma", Bertil Lintner

came from the former leaders of Shan United Revolutionary Army, who remained influential in the TRC alliance. They wished to promote Shan nationalism and distance the Shan insurgency from the corruption of the narcotics trade. Both the insurgents and the farmers of the Shan State had become overly dependent on one commodity: opium. The TRC has been attempting to provide some alternatives to people in areas of direct control (TRC villages), and to obtain control over KMT and BCP trade routes. The TRC has offered to hand over captured (KMT and BCP) narcotics to Thai anti-narcotics agencies. At the same time, NDF forces supporting KMT forces against the TRC have handed over to the Thai agencies narcotics captured from TRC sources.

The Shan insurgents of the TRC have expressed eagerness for cooperation in anti-narcotics programs with Thai and U.S. agencies. The TRC feels that since they, not the Burmese government, controls the opium growing area, the U.S. and Thailand should work with them, not the Burmese government. The TRC is apparently willing to provide access to its opium growing area to U.S. or Thai anti-narcotics research and advisory teams. The TRC would probably be willing to put the annual crop up for sale to the U.S. government again, although a formal offer has not been made (as of May 1986). An American observer in northern Thailand recently stated:

"I have come to the belief that an attempt to re-establish the pre-emptory purchase of the Shan State opium out-put should be made. No one likes to lose a war and the DEA will never admit that they can't win. But I think that the time has come when we should try another approach. Since neither we, nor the Burmese, can control what crops are grown in the Shan States, we should go to the people who can control them. If nothing else, the purchase for a few years of the opium crop would break up the arrangements for smuggling which are presently in effect, and if the purchases were stopped it should be easy to spot the new 'connections'. Whether or not the Shans can reduce the amount of poppy grown doesn't

really make that much difference. For a period of time the opium will be off the market and during that breathing spell other approaches can be made."

While the TRC is not in charge of the largest area of opium producing land in northern Burma (the BCP is), the TRC's positioning along the Thailand border gives it control over most of the transport of opium and heroin out of northern Burma. If encouraged to do so, the TRC could probably cut the supply lines of most of the world's largest opium crop to the outside world.

THE INSURGENCY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

The strategic location of Burma makes it important to several other nations. The various insurgent groups of Burma's frontiers maintain contact with foreign groups and governments. A survey of foreign governments' interests in the Burma frontier insurgency follows:

China (PRC): China contributed substantially to Burma's destabilization from the 1950's through the early 80's, by supporting the Burma Communist Party. The BCP was armed, supplied, and trained by the Chinese. Support flowed from Yunnan Province in China to the BCP controlled areas of northern Burma. The Chinese also provided aid to Kachin and Naga insurgent groups. In the past few years, relations between China and Burma have improved markedly, and most Chinese aid to the BCP has been withdrawn. Nonetheless, many observers believe that China continues to support other rebel groups, such as the Kachin. Black market smuggling continues to flourish on the China-Burma border, with Chinese goods entering Burma through the trade run by insurgent groups. KMT forces in Burma are heavily involved in the narcotics trade (conducted in Thailand) and are not a threat to China in any way.

India: Recently, India has sought to strengthen ties with Burma.

India is aware of the increased relationship between Burma and China (India's rival in the area). Burma and India border in a region under insurgent control. On the Indian side of the border, Naga and other tribal insurgents hold sway, while on the Burma side, the Kachin rebels hold much of the territory, along with Naga groups. India is said to feel that Burma has not done enough to control the Kachin, allowing arms shipments, narcotics and other contraband to enter Nagaland from Chinese and Shan sources.

Bangladesh: Insurgency in Arakan has been supported by Moslem groups in neighboring Bangladesh. The Bangladesh government has had conflicts with tribal groups in its northeast area, but it is unclear whether any of those groups have links with tribal insurgents in Burma. The smuggling trade from Arakan to Bangladesh thrives.

Laos: During the 70's, narcotics trade groups such as the SUA and KMT forces operated freely in northern Laos. Narcotics trade in Laos appears to have greatly declined since then. Little information is available on the relations between Laos and insurgent groups in Burma. There has been speculation that the BCP may be receiving support from the Vietnamese/Soviets through Laos.

Vietnam: When China cut aid to the BCP, the possibility that the BCP might turn to Vietnam for aid arose. Evidence of such an alliance has not appeared yet. Some observers feel that China still has enough leverage with the BCP to prevent such an alliance.

U.S.S.R.: The Soviets have tried to maintain a good relationship with the Burmese government. Several Soviet aid programs failed during the 1960's, but since then there have been several aid projects donated by East Bloc countries. While Burma is neutral, it is not anti-Soviet as are the ASEAN nations. Therefore the Soviets consider Burma "soft-line", with potential for alliance. The Burmese economic system bears a resemblance to that of some East Bloc countries. The USSR would like to prevent China gaining influence in Burma (China could gain an Indian Ocean port, and access to mineral resources). If the USSR was able to gain the allegiance of BCP forces by arming them through Vietnam, the Soviets would gain another presence on the southern border of China. This could undermine Soviet efforts to improve relations with the Burmese government, however. Further, it is questionable whether the BCP (well-financed by the drug trade, and strengthened by a recent "united front" agreement with the NDF) need or desire an alliance with the Vietnamese and Soviets.

Thailand: The insurgency on Burma's frontiers places Thailand in a difficult position. On the one hand, Thai interests have benefitted from the smuggling trade, and the insurgent groups have provided a buffer zone between Thailand and Burma (which has been a traditionally hostile neighbor). On the other hand, Thailand maintains cordial diplomatic relations with Burma, in contrast to the overt hostility on Thailand's borders with Laos and Cambodia. Thai policy towards the insurgents has seemed inconsistent. In the southern border area, Burmese troops have shelled Thai territory in attacking Karen forces on the border. Over 17,000 Karen and Mon refugees have taken refuge on the Thai side of the border in the past few years. In the north, fighting between KMT forces and Shan forces has spilled over into Thailand. The SUA narcotics operation was driven out of Thailand (into northern Burma), but KMT narcotics operations continue within Thailand. Recently the Shan rebel group TRC revealed the locations of several KMT narcotics traders in Thailand, to the Thai anti-narcotics authorities. Thailand has cracked down on some KMT crime, but many of the major KMT figures operate ~~freely~~ in Thailand. The Thai and Shan peoples are ethnically related, and the relationship between the Thai military and the TRC has been fairly amicable. That relationship is strained by Thailand's need to cooperate with the American DEA, which tends to perceive the TRC as simply a criminal organization.

United States: U.S. interest in the insurgency in Burma has tended to center on the narcotics trade rather than on the political situation as a whole. Burma's careful neutrality has effectively shielded its political, economic and human rights conditions from too much U.S. scrutiny. The U.S. anti-narcotics efforts have centered on aid to Burma for drug eradication: helicopters that were used against Karen insurgents completely uninvolved in the drug trade, and the current program in which extremely toxic 2,4-D herbicide is being sprayed in an uncontrolled manner over hill tribe areas of the Shan State. Both

programs may be more effective in encouraging tribesmen to join the insurgency than in suppressing the narcotics trade. Other efforts, conducted in Thailand, have consisted of identifying "kingpin" or "Godfather" figures felt responsible for the entire drug trade. In the 70's, Lo Hsing-han was singled out as the "Godfather" of the drug trade. After his arrest, Khun Sa (of the SUA) was picked as "Godfather". Khun Sa is now in the TRC, which has an anti-narcotics policy and has sought U.S. aid in drug suppression.

There are few Burmese or minority group members living in the U.S. There has been some support for the Karen insurgents from right-wing publications in the U.S., and some aid for Karen refugees from U.S. church groups.

Japan: Japan is Burma's main source of foreign aid and development programs. Books and articles supporting the Karen insurgents have been published in Japan, and right-wing groups supporting the Karen have protested Japan's aid to Burma.

Taiwan: Taiwan initially supported the KMT forces that settled in northern Burma. Many of the KMT forces have relatives in Taiwan. Taiwanese delegations have visited KMT, Shan and other rebel areas, and insurgent leaders have been flown to Taiwan for consultations. Taiwanese arms have been made available to the Karen and other insurgent groups, not as aid, but for sale. The Kachin also maintain contacts with Taiwan. It is unclear whether such contacts are with Taiwan's government or with independent anti-Communist groups in Taiwan. The World Anti-Communist League, an organization set up by the Taiwanese and South Korean governments in the 1960's maintains relations with several insurgent groups, such as the Kachin.

Western Europe: Most of the arms the Burmese government uses to fight the insurgents come from West Germany. BSPP president Ne Win has extensive contacts with European businesses, and arms are often purchased through personal deals. Western European nations have given drug eradication aid to Burma through the U.N., much of which was alleged to be diverted for other purposes by the Burmese government. A small number of Belgian and other European military volunteers have served with Karen insurgent forces in recent years, and French volunteer doctors have worked in Karen refugee camps.

Moslem Countries: Various Arakanese rebel groups have reportedly either been approached by or approached agents of Moslem countries about possible backing. Countries mentioned include Pakistan, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, and Libya. Nothing seems to have come of any of these approaches, as the Arakanese rebel movement remains small and under-financed. A Karen National Union adjunct, the Kawthoolei Moslem Army, may be seeking aid from Moslem countries.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

What the map shows as "Burma" has been the home of many different cultures and conflicting civilizations. With the end of the Colonial period, the Burmese gained the upper hand. A Burmese government became a military dictatorship with a debilitated economy. The nation, rich in resources, was plunged into poverty.

Groups opposed to the Burmese government have been in constant rebellion. These groups include ethnic minorities who feel mortally threatened by Burmese domination, and groups such as the Burma Communist Party and the Kuomintang forces, whose original political motivations are overshadowed by their success in the narcotics trade. Some ethnic rebels (such as the Karen) oppose the narcotics trade, while others (like the Shan) have been corrupted by it.

The insurgents fight not only the Burmese government, but each other, as alliances shift and drug wars flare. As the insurgents control much of Burma's borders with neighboring countries, they greatly affect Burma's international relations. Some rebel groups have been backed by China, and a number of other countries have shown an interest in the insurgency.

U.S. attention has been focused narrowly on some aspects of the narcotics trade. U.S.-backed efforts at drug suppression in the area have met with little success, but alternative ways of combatting the drug trade may be found by looking at the larger picture.

The insurgency is more than a few powerful warlords. It is a large-scale rebellion with complex social, political and economic causes. Super-Power rivalries, human rights issues, and development

potential all come into play on the frontiers of Burma. It is only in an awareness of all these factors that a solution to the narcotics trade can be found. Awareness of the issues involved in the frontier insurgency may enable the U.S. to at last become a positive influence in Burma, after many years of being shut outside by the "lacquer screen".

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Far Eastern Economic Review (Hong Kong) provides extensive ongoing coverage of Burma (economics and politics) and the insurgency.
Asiaweek (Hong Kong) also covers Burma and the insurgency.

APPENDIX

SELECTED NEWS ARTICLES, 1983-86

1. "Burma Captures Karennis' Base", Bangkok Post (Thailand) May 21, 1986.
2. "Burma, Land of 1-Cent Cigar and Imported Ice", International Herald Tribune, May 16, 1986. Ian Macdowall.
3. "A Gathering of Rebels", Far Eastern Economic Review, May 22, 1986. Bertil Lintner.
4. "Burma Using Dangerous Herbicide", The Nation (Bangkok) April 14, 1986. Sinfah Tunsarawuth.
5. "Long-Running Revolt is Being Run out of Burma", The New York Times, November 8, 1985. Barbara Crossette.
6. "Karen People in Burma Are More Than an Ethnic Group", The New York Times, November 1985. Bernard Nietschmann.
7. "Politics of Opium", Inside Asia (London), September-October 1985. Martin Smith.
8. "Two-front Insurgency", Far Eastern Economic Review, September 1985. Rodney Tasker.
9. "Forgotten Prisoners", Far Eastern Economic Review, August 29, 1985. Bertil Lintner.
10. "Fighting Many Foes", Asiaweek, August 16, 1985.
11. "Life Gets Tougher", Asiaweek, August 16, 1985. Anthony Davis.
12. "India Courts its 'Quiet Neighbour'", Asiaweek, August 16, 1985.
13. "In Rangoon They're All Looking Out For No. 1", Bangkok Post (Thailand) May 29, 1983. Vijid Wongwain.
14. "Warlords of the Poppy Fields", Bangkok Post (Thailand), February 24, 1983. Vichai S.

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Burma captures Karennis' base

RANGOON has claimed a victory over one of Burma's oldest and smallest ethnic rebellions in overrunning the headquarters of the Karenni guerrillas in Kayah state near the Thai border.

A two-part report in the official Burmese press on Sunday and Monday said Burmese troops captured the Karenni headquarters at Hwayponlaung, 240 kilometres northeast of Rangoon and 150 kilometres west of Chiang Mai on April 12.

Analysts told Agence France Presse the move against the Karennis demonstrated Rangoon's determination to eliminate the ethnic and communist rebellions which have plagued the government since independence in 1948.

The Karennis, of Mongol stock and distinct from the ethnic Karens who are also campaigning for autonomy, first revolted against the Burmese in 1866.

Although they won independence the following year after Burma's colonisation by the British — a situation the Burmese acknowledged in 1875 and which forms the basis for the Karennis' current claim — they were incorporated into the Burmese nation in 1948.

They took to the field against the Burmese again in 1952, and now their 600-man army, commanded by Abel Tweed, a young Christian graduate of

Rangoon University, is allied to eight other non-communist ethnic guerrilla movements within the National Democratic Front founded in the 1970s by the Karens.

The Karennis earn their living mainly by smuggling between Thailand and Burma. Like the Karens, they have taken strict measures to ban opium and heroin trafficking.

The government's account of the capture of their headquarters said troops had found 495 kilogrammes of marijuana, but made no mention of heroin or opium.

The number of people under the Karennis' control is difficult to estimate as their area of operation in Kayah state is covered in dense jungle and hard to reach.

But Burmese authorities said the capture of the headquarters provided proof that foreigners were helping the guerrillas operating along the Thai-Burmese border.

The Burmese press said that five Westerners fled into Thailand during the government attack and that two Westerners, named Lloyd and Andrew and identified as "brothers" of the rebels in captured documents, had brought 100 M16 assault rifles to the guerrillas in March 1985.

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MAY 16, '86

International Herald Tribune

Burma, Land of 1-Cent Cigar and Imported Ice

By Ian Macdowall
Reuters

RANGOON — Burma is still the land of the one-cent cigar.

Which is just as well since luxuries are rare in a country where a laborer earns the equivalent of 25 cents a day, less than the cost of a postcard in a state-run hotel for foreign tourists.

Black market touts will pay a tourist 200 kyats for his duty-free bottle of whisky. A junior government clerk's monthly salary is 210 kyats (\$30 at the official rate, \$7 at the black market rate).

Burma is a country of economic paradox. It is one of Asia's poorest nation, yet no one starves. It exports rice and imports ice.

It runs two economies, one official and inefficient to keep the state infrastructure running, the other a black one that keeps up at least a trickle of consumer goods to supply those Burmese with any surplus cash.

The black economy is tacitly tolerated by the government because, as a Western diplomat put it, it enables Burma to run an effective devaluation of the kyat. It is remarkably efficient in an inefficient country.

A Burmese with enough cash to buy a record player can place an order with a black market dealer and expect with some confidence to have it delivered within a few weeks.

With payoffs along the way to insurgent groups levying taxes on cross-border traffic and to government officials turning a blind eye to smuggling, the price is high.

The economic cost of the Burmese road to socialism is heavy. Western and Asian diplomats here say they know no other country where decision making is so slow and so much is referred upward.

"The sheer turgidity of the bureaucracy is staggering," one said. "They would rather do nothing than do something which could be proved wrong."

As simple a matter as authorizing a passport for a student to go abroad for training needs a cabinet-level decision.

"And the cabinet meets only once a fortnight," an Asian diplomat said.

Harsh realities have forced the government to abandon its attempt to achieve national self-sufficiency unaided. But although Burma still strives to minimize dependence on foreign help, its imports last year were 50 percent higher than exports — 5.65 billion kyats to 3.6 billion.

This negative balance of trade, aggravated by the slump in commodity prices, has given Burma one of the world's worst debt service ratios. Last year 42 percent of its foreign exchange earnings went to service its foreign debt of \$3.3 billion, according to the World Bank.

But a Western diplomat said he believed the actual figure was nearer 70 percent.

Chopping back imports to offset the fall in the value of exports, mainly rice and teak, only increased business on the black market, which diplomats reckon accounts for anything up to a half of Burmese economic activity.

Goods smuggled out across Burma's borders include rice, teak, drugs and precious stones. Much of the garlic and chili that spices Thai food is smuggled from Burma.

Burmese fishermen land their catches in Malaysia or Thailand, heading home with diesel fuel and ice with which to catch and freeze yet more fish. China has now probably replaced Thailand as the major source of goods smuggled in by land.

Given the refusal of a government obsessed with security to open the doors to foreign investment and the threats to political stability and cultural and social integrity that it sees as implicit in foreign influence, economic progress can only be slow.

Diplomats doubt that the World Bank's call for a more efficient taxation system and more flexible pricing mechanisms will be heeded.

Bank and government officials agree that progress depends on a continued flow of foreign aid on concessionary terms. But a willingness of donor countries to help is not necessarily enough.

Japan, which supplies more than half of Burma's bilateral aid, gave 10.7 billion yen (\$64.8 million) in

grants last year and a further 46.1 billion in credits at 2.75 percent interest.

But diplomats here said yen credits in the current year will drop to only 36.1 billion because Burma had not formulated proposals Japan considered adequate for loan projects.

If Burma can get the aid there is plenty that it could be spent on. The government's own immediate priorities are irrigation and the expansion and diversification of exports.

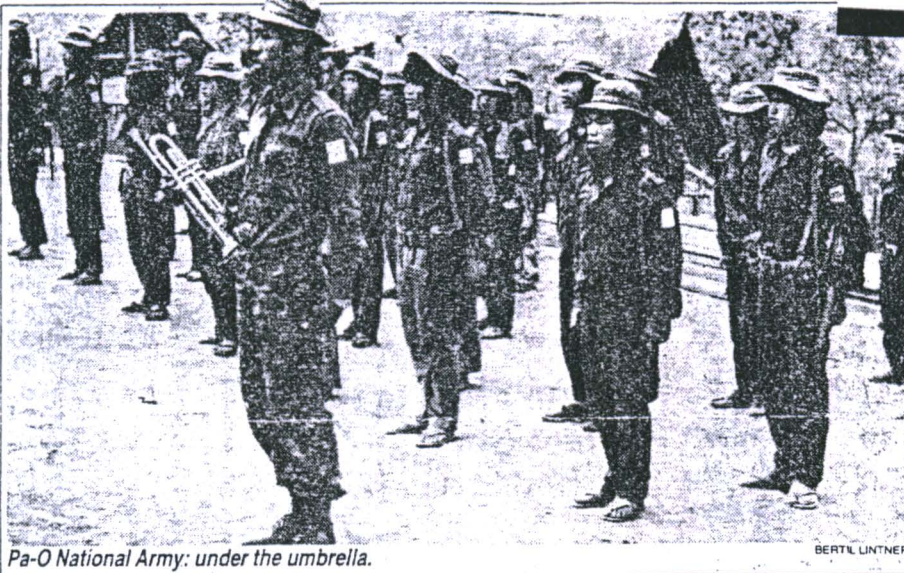
The potential for irrigation is enormous. The Irrawaddy, Burma's transport lifeline, discharges four times more water than the Nile. Yet only 2.5 million acres (1 million hectares) of Burma's 21 million cultivated acres are irrigated. The Nile irrigates six million acres.

Once the world's largest rice exporter, Burma has a dwindling share of the trade today. Because of poor milling and storage techniques it cannot get a premium price for its white rice, whose price dropped by half between 1981 and 1985.

Total exports last year were worth only 670 million kyats. For the first time teak edged rice out of first place as foreign exchange earner.

However, teak exports cannot be increased without depleting the forests and Burma hopes instead to expand exports of paper pulp, plywood and furniture.

Bangkok Post 21 May 1986



BURMA

A gathering of rebels

The country's disparate independence groups forge closer ties

By Bertil Lintner in Pa Jau

Unity among Burma's numerous rebel armies, for years divided along ethnic as well as political lines, has been elusive in the country's turbulent history since independence from Britain in 1948. This fragmentation is probably the main reason why Rangoon has managed to stand up to the challenges posed by both the Left and Right, and by the various insurgencies among the country's national minorities.

But recent developments in Burma could possibly lead to a break in the decades-long stalemate in the war between government forces and the rebel groups. An agreement has been forged to form a united front against Rangoon between the Burma Communist Party (BCP) and the non-communist National Democratic Front (NDF), an umbrella organisation comprising nine different rebel armies from Burma's Kachin, Shan, Karen, Karenni, Wa, Pa-O, Palaung, Mon and Arakanese minorities.

The formation of a Cambodian-style, anti-government coalition in Burma has been in the wind for quite some time (REVIEW, 13 Dec. '84), but the plan was expected to meet with stiff resistance from some NDF members who feared they would be dominated by the BCP if a broader front was set up. Now both sides seem to have made considerable concessions in order to make the front possible. The minority groups have in principle agreed to give up their previous separatist demands in favour of some kind of union, or federal structure of government in Burma.

For its part, the BCP said in a statement issued by its central committee on

25 October 1985 that it has renounced the idea of a one-party system of government and that it now is willing to accept what it calls "freedom and democracy." "A one-party system," the statement added, "is the policy of [the ruling] Burma Socialist Programme Party."

In April last year an NDF delegation — led by Soe Aung, from the embattled Karen National Union, and including representatives from all the other minority groups — left the Thai border for Pa Jau. The delegation reached Pa Jau, headquarters of the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), close to the Burma-China border, on 16 November 1985 after an arduous seven-month journey.

An armed escort for the group was provided by two other NDF members, the Shan State Army of the Shan State Progress Party and the Palaung State Liberation Army. The delegates say that the seeds of unity already were sown during the long trek north, when all the NDF members — for the first time in the front's 10-year history — faced the same hardships together.

A conference was held at Pa Jau from 16 December to 20 January, and many NDF delegates then admitted that their organisation had been a front in name only, with little or no coordination in the activities of its various members. As a first step towards closer military cooperation, it was decided to divide the NDF into three regional command areas. The northern command includes the Kachin, Shan and Palaung armies; the central command, the Pa-O, Wa and Karenni armies and, in the

south, the Karens, the Mons and the Arakanese.

The meeting also agreed to open a dialogue with the BCP and, at the same time, keep the door open to other opposition groups among the country's majority Burman population should any such groups emerge in future.

From Pa Jau, the NDF delegation, now headed by KIO chairman Brang Seng, proceeded to the BCP's Panghsang headquarters, where a second meeting was held between 17 and 24 March. It was presided over by aging BCP chairman Thakin Ba Thein Tin. Even at 73 and in failing health, the old communist leader was reported to be enthusiastic over the meeting and its outcome: a decision to coordinate military operations against the Rangoon government. The Panghsang meeting also agreed that the NDF and the BCP should work together politically but not interfere in each other's affairs.

The BCP had held its third congress in September-October 1985, when it adopted a policy which NDF spokesmen have described as more flexible than before. The BCP, they said, has now given up its old policy of demanding sole leadership over fronts with other insurgent groups and now stresses equality and close cooperation between itself and its allies.

The Rangoon government's response to these rather unexpected developments came swiftly. It renewed attacks against Karen bases along the Thai border and launched a major offensive against the Kachins on the western fringes of the Hukawng Valley. Fourteen battalions of Burmese troops are currently engaged in assaults on Kachin camps near Ledo Road, which goes through the Hukawng Valley, and early this month six battalions launched a concerted strike on the headquarters of the 2nd Brigade of the Kachin Independence Army, the armed wing of the KIO. Troop movements have also been reported near Panghsang, but it is still uncertain whether an operation will be mounted there as well.

While the past few months have seen a clear polarisation of the forces in Burma, observers agree that many problems still remain. The NDF delegates at Pa Jau conceded that they still may have different opinions as to what kind of unified structure Burma should have in the future. But as Brang Seng told the REVIEW in an interview at Pa Jau: "The main thing is that we have agreed to stress the points on which we are united — and to minimise our remaining differences — through discussions."

Exactly how the cooperation between the NDF's different members and, more importantly between the NDF and the BCP, will work in the field also remains to be seen. The NDF is expected to discuss these questions at its coming congress, which is scheduled to be held later this year. □

By Sinfah Tunsarawuth

THE HERBICIDE being used to destroy poppy trees in Burma is a chemical that is dangerous to human and environment and is not recommended by the United Nations, informed sources said.

Spraying of the chemical, known as "2,4-D," from airplane, a practice by the Burmese Government, is an application particularly warned against, the sources said.

The sources said the Burmese Government started using the herbicide by aerial spraying to eliminate poppy trees since the 1984-1985 growing season.

The using of the 2,4-D to kill poppy trees was a bilateral aid programme the United States provided to Rangoon, according to the sources. However, they said it was the Burmese decision to make use of the chemical.

The herbicide was introduced in Thailand, which has opium-producing areas in the North. But due to its toxicity to human and environment, the Thai Government rejected its application here, according to the sources.

The 2,4-D was a compound used in the production of the controversial Agent Orange the principal defoliant used by US troops during the Vietnam war. The effect of the agent on health of American servicemen engaging in the war has

been much publicized.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the US Government, which has to certify chemicals applying with environment, in 1980 requested more extensive tests on the 2,4-D for causing deformed fetus, cancer and reproductive impairment in laboratory animals.

In "A Handbook of Pesticides Regulated in the United States" published by the National Wildlife Federation, it was reported the EPA is presently awaiting the results of these tests.

The handbook said the EPA has had to require further tests because the 2,4-D was frequently used together with 2,4,5-T which was suspended for most uses in 1979, and there was deficiencies in the chronic and subchronic toxicity data supporting the registration of 2,4-D.

The Agent Orange was a mixture of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T.

"In spite of the agency's conclusion that 2,4,5-T use posed an unwarranted teratogenic and fetotoxic risk, EPA could not determine that 2,4,5-T alone was responsible for all the observed effects. Thus, 2,4-D was placed under investigation," the document said.

The EPA is also concerned with the presence of dioxins in 2,4-D formulations. Dioxins are a class of "extremely toxic chemicals" that are present as contaminants in nearly all formulations of 2,4,5-T.

"There is independent evidence that many formulations of 2,4-D are also contaminated with dioxins," the EPA said in its report.

The agency warned users of 2,4-D to avoid spray drift the chemical or contamination of water supply with it.

However, the way the Burmese Government sprayed the herbicide from airplane allowed contamination in water resources and areas where dairy animals are grazed, sources said.

The sources said Rangoon had to use the herbicide to destroy poppy trees since manual eradication by Burmese troops were obstructed by rebel minorities.

Many Burmese troops were killed by insurgents when they entered poppy growing areas of maimed by land mines planted by the insurgents. However, the Burmese Government did not give up the poppy eradication by troops.

Sources said Rangoon started to launch a big campaign to eliminate opium since 1978. It was estimated that 12,500-25,000 rai (5,000-10,000 acres) of poppy cultivation areas were destroyed each year.

Although the Burmese Government has tried to diminish cultivation areas, Opium output from the Burmese part of the Golden Triangle has increased in recent years, sources said.

The US Government estimated 534 and 424 metric tons of opium came out of Burma in 1984 and 1985 respectively. However, observers put the figure as 600-650 tons a year.

One observer said the use of 2,4-D might not help decrease opium production in Burma instead would antagonize hilltribe people who were afflicted by the chemical and push them into association with rebel groups which are fighting against the Burmese Government.

Eradication of poppy fields

Burma using dangerous herbicide

THE NATION

April 14, 1983

Long-Running Revolt Is Being

Run Out of Burma

By BARBARA CROSSETTE

Special to The New York Times

MAE SOT, Thailand — In the rugged, teak-forested hills of eastern Burma across the river from here, the Burmese Army is closing in on one of the world's longest running and least known separatist struggles — the Karen rebellion.

Thousands of civilians from Karen State in Burma have fled across the Moei River in the last few months to seek refuge in Thailand.

They say they are running from the shelling and burning of their villages and from a forced-labor portage system that the advancing Burmese are using to move arms and equipment across difficult, roadless terrain.

Between 15,000 and 20,000 Karens are now living in a string of refugee camps stretching north from Mae Sot to the confluence of the Moei and Salween rivers, where the rebellion and its leader, Gen. Bo Mya, have headquarters.

Fighting Since 1948

The Karens, member of a Chinese-Thai ethnic group, have been fighting since 1948, when Burma became independent from Britain. In effect, many but not all Karens, who represent between 5 and 10 percent of the population of Burma, have never recognized the Rangoon Government.

Some refugees bring accounts of Burmese torture and atrocities. These charges are hard to confirm, since victims of such violence are not appearing for treatment here, medical workers say, and few come forward with firsthand testimony.

But many have experienced, and talk about, forced marches without food, and the emptying of villages as Burmese troops move people into settlements where they can be controlled.

At the refugee settlement of Kamawlaykho, about 40 miles north of here, 25-year-old Nan Haw said she and her husband, Par Wee, 26, fled their home in early October because "the Burmese want to make our village into a base."

On the Burmese side of the Moei, fewer than half a dozen Karen military encampments hold out against intermittent bombardment and a gradual loss of communications as Burma's troops seek to isolate the outposts from one another and from their sources of money and logistical support.

Two Trains Sabotaged

In May and July, sabotage attacks on two Burmese trains — both carrying troops, the Karens say — brought brief worldwide attention. In the second attack, for which exiled Karen leaders here publicly deny responsibility, a mine set under the track between Burma's capital and Mandalay blew a locomotive and six cars off the rails, killing dozens of people.

In recent weeks, the Karen rebellion has come under closer scrutiny from the Thai Army because several foreigners were discovered fighting with the guerrillas, who were being battered by what they describe as the heaviest Burmese attack this year.



Nan Haw, 25 years old, with her children at the refugee settlement of Kamawlaykho, 40 miles north of Mae Sot, Thailand. Advancing Burmese troops have forced thousands of civilians from the Karen State in Burma to seek refuge in Thailand.

A French national was killed by the Burmese, and an Australian was wounded. Thailand, careful not to upset delicate relations with Burma, does not want to appear to be allowing foreigners to cross this country to join an anti-Burmese rebellion.

Karen military leaders here say they are not recruiting mercenaries for their small force, thought to number 4,000, down from 10,000 to 12,000 a decade or more ago. They say the outsiders are adventurers who hear about them through Soldier of Fortune and other paramilitary magazines and who volunteer to help in guerrilla training.

Strongly Anti-Communist

For the most part, however, the Karens have been fighting an unreported war. They are strongly anti-Communist when many separatist movements have taken on more leftward-leaning ideologies that draw at least publicity and support abroad.

"When the Burmese go to the West, they tell lies about us; they call us Communists," Col. Taw Hla, a Karen battalion commander, told a reporter taken to his bunkered headquarters on the Burmese side of the Moei.

"What we want is pluralism — a genuine union of states on an equal footing," he said. "It is the Burmese who are trying to force a socialist system on everybody."

The Karens get little tangible outside help, except for humanitarian assistance from a few organizations and Western missionary families.

Many Karens are Protestant Christians, converted by Baptist mission-

aries while under British rule. They have names like David, Wallace, Lydia, Robert, and Joshua. Other Karens are Buddhists or animists, like the majority of the people of Burma.

Allies of the British against the Japanese occupation in World War II, the Karens believed they would be rewarded with considerable autonomy within an independent postwar union of ethnic states. In their view of history, the settlements of their people predated the movement of ethnic Burmans into the area, giving them the right to some control of their homeland.

By 1949, civil war was under way to establish a Karen state, called Kawthoolei, "the land of flowers" in the Karen language.

The fortunes of the Karens have risen and fallen since, depending on the ability of the central Government to deal with their insurrection. The conflict has been one of a host of ethnic and ideological rebellions that have kept almost all the national borders out of Rangoon's control.

A Blow to Their Trade

Harassed but never defeated in more than three decades of skirmishing, the Karens built a strong economic base by selling or collecting levies on teak, gemstones, cattle and other products smuggled out of Burma through their territory. They also taxed, at 5 percent, the return trade in smuggled consumer goods from Thailand that Rangoon's markets grew to depend on.

Corruption flourished on both sides of the border, and nothing seriously dis-

Continued

New York Times

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Continued

rupted the trade, carried on by human porters or elephant caravans linking the Burmese city of Moulmein with this town and other Thai market centers.

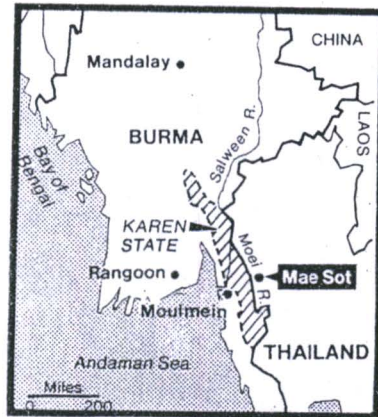
Over the last two years, however, the Government of Gen. Ne Win, who has ruled Burma since 1962, apparently decided to put an end to the Karen insurrection.

General Ne Win has used a combined military and economic strategy against the Karens. The damage his army's recent severing of traditional trade routes has done is evident in the guerrillas' dwindling supplies of weapons. They are learning, an officer said, to improvise. Mines are made of bamboo tubes, and they are trying to produce explosives from natural substances.

The success of the Burmese campaign is also apparent in the empty shops and among mournful merchants in this once-booming trading and smuggling center. This month, for the first time in memory, several weeks passed without porters getting through from Moulmein and Rangoon to one or another of the once-safe river-crossing points, a Karen refugee said. His story was confirmed by shopkeepers.

If the 37-year-long rebellion collapsed, would the Karens be able to negotiate an accord with Rangoon?

"That depends on General Ne Win," said David Wayne Thakabaw, a Karen leader with a science degree from Rangoon University. Asked to suggest a model for the kind of Burma he could accept, he thought for a while and answered, "Switzerland."



The New York Times/Barbara Crossette

More Than 11 Peoples in Burma Are More Than an Ethnic Group

Dear Editor:

Your Nov. 8 article on the Karen-Burma war skirted and clouded several important issues behind this 37-year-long conflict. As portrayed, the Karen are an "ethnic group" within Burma's territory who are either fighting a "rebellion," an "insurrection" or a "separatist struggle" against the Government.

But like the Apaches, who were neither rebels nor separatists, the Karen perspective from the other side of the frontier is very different. The Karen are a people (four to five million population) who have their own nation, government and armed forces. They never agreed to be incorporated into Burma, and as a result they have been forced to fight a long defensive war against Burma.

Rangoon is waging two wars: one against the Burma Communist Party, which seeks to topple Gen. Ne Win's Government and his "Burmese Way to Socialism"; and another war against several indigenous nations that seek to stop and reverse the Burmese invasion and occupation. The Karen are one of the largest and best

organized of 11 indigenous peoples threatened by forced incorporation and assimilation into the Burmese Socialist state.

In 1976 nine of these indigenous peoples formed the National Democratic Front (Arakan, Kachin, Karenni, Karen, Mon, Pa-O, Paloung, Shan and Wa), which represents a total population of some 7.5 million (one-fourth of "Burma"), and controls over 30 percent of what Rangoon asserts is the Burmese state. Each of the nine N.D.F. nations has its own armed defense force, with the Karen National Liberation Army being the largest.

Rangoon's position is that these peoples are dissident minorities ("hill tribes") at the sovereign and economic margins of the Burmese state, and that the Burma Socialist Program Party Government has the right and the power to consolidate, develop and defend "national territory." In opposition to this, the Karen, along with other indigenous peoples, maintain that they are an independent people with their own government and national territory that they will

defend against Burmese attempts to invade, occupy and annex.

Burma and many other third-world states that were formed on the outlines of imposed colonial territories have become the new colonialists and imperialists against independent and unconsenting indigenous nations and peoples. It is ironic, perhaps, that the Karen people are actually fighting to join Burma as a self-governing autonomous territory within a federated union of different peoples, which includes the Burmese.

While more than half of the world's 45 hot wars involve indigenous nations against internationally recognized states, all of the rules of war and rights of self-determination are established by states to protect states. Internationally, indigenous nations have almost no rights; if they resist a state's military and economic onslaught, indigenous defense forces are labeled "rebels," "separatists" or "terrorists."

BERNARD NIETSCHMANN
Professor of Geography
University of California
Berkeley, Calif., Nov. 16, 1985

New York Times
Nov 8 '85



The Shan United Army, one of the many insurgent armies dependent on income from opium.

BURMA'S SHAN REBEL GROUPS

Politics of opium

Burma's Shan state produces 80% of the opium grown in the Golden Triangle. It is also home to a greater variety of insurgent armies than anywhere else on earth. **Martin Smith** investigates the politics of opium and uncovers a morass of constantly shifting and, at times, unlikely alliances.

ACROSS THE FORESTED mountains of the Golden Triangle as the first rains begin, hill tribe farmers are busily trading the last of this year's opium harvest. Estimates of the crop vary, as they do every year, from between 300 and 800 tons, but as every year the simple truth is that nobody really knows. The opium poppy is notoriously susceptible to vagaries in the weather. But in Thailand where the crop is most strictly monitored, narcotics police are predicting a bumper harvest for the fourth successive year.

In Thailand itself the annual opium crop has been reduced with the aid of various UN-sponsored crop substitution programmes from a peak of over 140 tons twenty years ago to an estimated 35 tons today. Although it is on Thailand that most international attention focuses as the region's major transshipment point for narcotics, it is across the Burmese

border, and in the rugged Shan State in particular, that an estimated 80% of the opium crop is grown today.

Wild and lawless

Shan State is a wild and lawless place. A vast highland plateau, the size of England and Wales and divided by deep mountains and precipitous rivers, it plays host to a greater variety of insurgent armies than perhaps any other place on earth. In British days it remained in a state of chronic underdevelopment, administered separately by over thirty 'sawbwa' or princely families, each with their own fiefdom. Only at independence in 1948 were these merged and incorporated as a federal state into the new Union of Burma, but with the unusual right of secession after a ten-year trial period granted in the constitution as a concession to nationalist sentiment.

However, from the outset, unity amongst the various indigenous races proved elusive. Shortly after independence a rebellion broke out amongst Pao hill tribe farmers in the west of the state. But more seriously tense relations between the majority Shans and the largely Burman government in Rangoon deteriorated considerably in the early 1950s when several thousand Guomindang (KMT) remnants from China blundered into the state bringing in their wake the first Burmese troops, whose record of behaviour often proved little better. It was the CIA-backed KMT with their vital overseas connections who first elevated the opium trade to its international proportions and who also showed the growing number of young Shan separatists the potential for armed rebellion.

It was to head off this movement that Burma's present military ruler, General Ne Win, already faced with serious Karen and Communist Party insurgencies, seized power in 1962. However this only served to fuel the rebellion further. Within a few years armed uprisings, often based on old feudal or territorial loyalties, had broken out across the state. The rebellion soon spread to the minority hill tribe groups who make up a third of the state's estimated six million population.

Separatist forces

Today there are no less than three major Shan separatist forces: the Shan State Army (SSA), politically the most influential but much reduced after a series of assassinations and factional splits; the well armed and disciplined Shan United Army (SUA) of the 'opium warlord' Khun Sa, which draws much of its popular support from Khun Sa's home district of Loi Maw; and the Tai Revolutionary Army, formed last year by veteran Shan nationalist leader and one-time communist, Kwon Jerng, alias Mo Heing, from an alliance of SSA defectors and the now defunct Shan United Revolutionary Army. SURA itself had for many years been closely allied with SUA's bitter rivals in the opium trade, the KMT, who still play a pivotal rôle in the cross border traffic.

However the combined forces of these three probably do not equal either of the two strongest forces in the state—the 10,000 strong 'People's Army' of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) which built up a large 'liberated zone' along the Chinese border in the north in the 1970s (which includes the prize poppy fields of the Kokang and Wa substates) and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) whose main force is based in the Kachin State to the north but whose powerful 4th Brigade operates amongst the Kachin villages to the south.

To complicate matters even further there are several Lahu, Wa, Palaung, Kayan (Padaung) and Pao hill tribe forces, each several hundred strong and themselves split into left and right factions.

All the insurgent groups profess political objectives to varying degrees but for most survival depends on the ability to raise arms, either through seizures or purchases on the blackmarket. Although some do have their own sources of income (for the KIA it is jade, for the CPB, China) in this impoverished backwater opium is the only lucrative cash crop. As the late General Tuan Shi-wen of the KMT 5th Army once explained to the *Sunday Telegraph*, 'To fight you must have an army, and an army must have guns and to buy guns you must have money. In these mountains the only money is opium.'

Revenue from opium

Perhaps only the SUA of Khun Sa, who on his own admittance has handled up to 250 tons of opium a year, is totally dependent on the opium trade, but most raise at least some revenue through it, either through taxes on the farmers or levies on the convoys which pass through their territory, or even on occasion running convoys themselves. In their defence they argue that on their own, and without the sort of aid given to neighbouring Thailand, they simply do not have the means to introduce substitute crops.

The Burmese government for its part claims last year to have seized over 4,000



Alternatives to opium are not yet commercially viable.

kilos of opium and 62.17 kilos of heroin. But many observers, denied access to the state by the Rangoon government, are sceptical. Certainly the government's own accounts of military operations against rebel groups involved in the opium trade, especially the SUA, suggest a lack of commitment. In this year's anti-narcotics offensive of February and March, the Burmese army claims to have killed twenty insurgents for the loss of two Government troops, figures which indicate a level of fighting far below current operations against Karen and Kachin insurgent forces elsewhere in Burma.

It appears that the Burmese government, faced with such diverse insurgencies, has little interest in moving against the opium trade, not least because trafficking in opium tends to obscure the political aspirations of the rebels from the outside world. Moreover, the anti-narcotics fight can be a useful source of aid and support. As a popular saying in the state goes, 'Everybody knows opium is good. It's good for the people and it's good for the government. When there's a good crop the farmer can buy a car and if it's really good the government can get a helicopter.' Of 18 Bell helicopters donated to the Burmese government by the USA under an anti-narcotics programme at least two have been shot down by Karen insurgents in the south of Burma who adamantly renounce any involvement in the opium trade.

Offer rejected

In recent years only one serious attempt has been made in the west to investigate the narcotics situation inside Shan State. In 1973, in an offer repeated in 1975, an alliance of

Shan rebels, led by the Shan State Army but including key rebel leaders such as Khun Sa and Lo Hsing-han, proposed to sell the entire opium crop of some 400 tons passing through their hands to the US government for approximately \$20 million, a fraction of the amount the US was then spending annually on anti-narcotics programmes. It was an offer several congressmen took very seriously and led to several meetings with Shan leaders and a series of Congressional hearings filmed by British film-maker Adrian Cowell in his remarkable documentary trilogy on the opium trade.

Eventually President Carter turned the offer down. To have accepted would have meant virtual recognition of the minorities' political goals, though many analysts were rather more sceptical about the enforcement of such a deal. A similar pre-emptive purchase from the KMT on the Thai border in 1972 ended in farce when, after the US government had contributed \$1 million for the public destruction of the KMT's opium stockpile of 26 tons, a 27th ton suddenly became available in return for more funds.

New developments

Although many observers have long seen the situation inside Shan State as one of unending chaos there are signs that a series of developments over the last three years, while symptomatic of the general confusion, could well break this deadlock. The initiatives for this come from across the Burmese borders from China, where aid has been steadily reduced to the Communist Party of Burma and relations with the Burmese government increasingly normalized, and perhaps more impor-

tantly from Thailand where the government has traditionally tolerated the activities of the various insurgent groups on its borders.

The two groups most heavily involved in the narcotics trade, Khun Sa's SUA and the KMT, have long been regarded as anti-communist buffers in an area of rural communist insurgency. However, with the rapid decline of the Communist Party of Thailand in the last few years and the growing involvement of the Communist Party of Burma in the opium trade since the reduction in Chinese aid, this rôle has been increasingly called into question. With the CPB controlling the best poppy fields and the SUA convoys the major traffickers in the state, the conclusion that they have come to some kind of deal is inescapable. American pressure on the Thais to act was considerable.

It was against the SUA that the Thai government first moved, seizing their stronghold at Ban Hin Taek on the Thai side of the border in January 1982 after a fierce battle. Then last June the government turned against the KMT. The remaining border militia were ordered to disarm, take out new identity cards and send their children to Thai schools. To back this up raids were carried out on KMT villages in which several KMT troops were killed.

At first the new Thai policy appeared only to inflame the situation. Far from finishing the SUA as many analysts had predicted the loss of their Thai sanctuary prompted SUA commanders into urgent action. New recruits were enlisted as they began rapidly to expand their territory in the south of the state, largely at the expense of the Shan State Army and various hill tribe forces along the border. With the capture of a Pao base at Mae Aw in March 1984, most of the Shan-Thai border with the exception of a narrow enclave controlled by the Tai Revolutionary Army was in SUA hands. A battle between the two appeared only a matter of time. As the TRA's 'Foreign Secretary', Khern Sai, remarked ominously at the time, 'We are fighting a different kind of war now; a war of nerves.'

Shan front

In one of the dramatic changes of alliance which make Shan politics so baffling to outsiders, a new Shan front, the United Shan State's Patriotic Council (USSPC) was suddenly announced on 7 April this year. Formed from a coalition of the SUA, TRA and southern SSA it marks the first time since the Shan rebellion began that all the Shan groups on the Thai border have been in alliance. As yet military details of the new formation have not been disclosed but it is open to all groups in Shan State who support a three-point platform; anti-the governing Burma Socialist Programme Party, anti-Communist Party of Burma and most significantly anti-narcotics.

Of Khun Sa no mention has been made but the TRA's President Kwon Jerng has been elected 'Prime Minister' of the new council;

renewing speculation about the health of the 52 year-old Khun Sa. In January the Bangkok press gave front page coverage to one report of his death, but although Khun Sa is known to be suffering from diabetes, such stories are almost certainly premature.

However the new alliance cannot be dismissed completely. A number of leading Shan political figures are behind it, such as the TRA's secretary-general, Chao Norfah, himself a minority Palaung and the son of one of the Shan hereditary *sawbwas*, and Khwan Mong, a one-time high-ranking left-wing officer in the Shan State Army who was a regular visitor to China in the 1970s. They have been holding meetings with many of the Shan leaders past and present over a two year period. Uppermost is the realization that without outside support, and in particular from Thailand, the Shan rebellion could soon be finished. As a TRA policy statement warned in January, 'The drugs problem isn't a drugs problem but a political question. It can be settled only politically, only by the Shan people and the political organization which speaks for them. In the past, however, the Shans have not been able to take up this responsibility. But if they do not today, they'll perish once and for all.'

As the first step in the new Council's anti-narcotics programme a survey is being undertaken of the total opium trade in Shan State before possible methods of crop substitution are considered. This process is strikingly reminiscent of the lead-up to the 1973 proposals to the US government. Whether they will be any more successful this time is unlikely but the intention no doubt is to gain more favourable recognition for the Shan cause. As the TRA statement asked, 'Why are the Afghans and the Pakistanis not annihilated but aided with every possible means?'

In the short term more crucial for the success of the USSPC is how far the other non-communist minority forces can be encouraged to join this alliance. In principle many of the minorities welcome this development. As Aung Kham Hti, President of the Pao National Army which has clashed with all the Shan groups in the past explained, 'Our attitude has been from the very beginning we need the kind of front that can represent the whole of Shan State, including all the minority peoples. Our problem in Shan politics has been that if you ally with one side the other two will attack you. But if they can unify into one alliance we can cooperate with them very easily.'

Unity still elusive

However despite these sentiments the initial response of other minorities has not been good. In mid-April, Pao, Wa and KMT troops under the apparent direction of Karen officers from the pro-western National Democratic Front (NDF) fought a fierce five-day battle with the SUA near Mae Aw in which at least 150 troops from both sides were killed or wounded. The NDF alliance has long regarded

the activities of the SUA as a major impediment to getting outside help for their struggle and may well be using Khun Sa's present difficulties as an opportunity to regain lost territory.

Moreover the TRA's long-time allies in the KMT appear unlikely to join the new alliance despite several entreaties from the TRA. Indeed last year the SUA and KMT continued their long rivalry which appears to have reached a new pitch of hostility. On 11 March the SUA is believed to have been behind the bombing of KMT leader General Lee Wen-Huan's Chiang Mai residence and KMT elements are largely seen as responsible for the murders of three of Khun Sa's key men, including his nephew, in northern Thailand between last November and January this year.

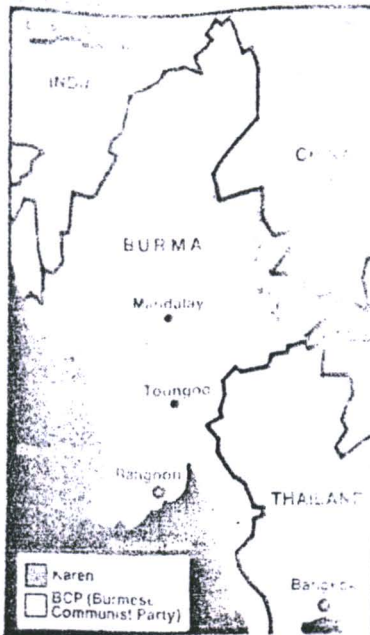
There has been no official reaction from the Thai government to date. In private many Thai army officers are sympathetic to the struggle of their Shan ethnic cousins but currently the priority in Bangkok is undoubtedly to clear any group involved in opium trafficking or heroin refining from the Thai side of the border. Last November Thai troops clashed several times with SUA troops apparently trying to infiltrate into northern Mae Hong Son province and in March Thai Rangers launched a savage and largely unexplained attack on the KMT village at Pieng Luang which left over thirty villagers dead.

In the battle inside Shan State in April Thai officers appear to have been supporting the hill tribe NDF troops. After the battle NDF commanders handed over a large quantity of opium captured from the SUA to Thai officers at the border. But whether the Thai government will continue with this hard-line attitude is rather doubtful. It will not have been forgotten that it was the outright American rejection of the 1973 and 1975 proposals which pushed many insurgents into the communist camp.

But whatever the political outcome, few observers seriously expect any dramatic change in opium production. The three cornerstones of the trade, hill tribe farmers who grow it, the rebel groups who transport and refine it, and the Chiu Chau syndicates who export it, will remain largely unaffected. Indeed by January prices on the border had dropped as low as 2,000 Baht (£60) for a *jo* (1.6 kilos) of opium and 12,000 baht (£360) for a kilo of heroin. There is already ample evidence to suggest that traffickers have a variety of well-oiled smuggling routes and have stockpiled supplies for any contingency. Indeed when prices last sky-rocketed as they did in 1979 and 1980—the answer was much more straightforward—two successive years of drought.

Martin Smith is a freelance journalist who has specialized in Burmese affairs and has spent considerable time in the region.

Karen troops: revenue strangled.



Burmese army troops: stepped-up campaign.

Two-front insurgency

Government forces fight Karens and communists in the north

Like a see-saw, a dramatic scaling down of fighting between the Burmese army and Burma Communist Party (BCP) insurgents in the north of the country over the past two years has freed more government troops to take part in an all-out assault on Karen rebels on the eastern border.

The current stepped-up army campaign against the Karens has cost both sides dearly in terms of casualties, with little prospect of either achieving complete victory. But the government has to a large extent succeeded in one important goal: strangling the black-market trade in consumer goods from Thailand which has traditionally been the main source of revenue for the Karen National Union (KNU).

The black market in such goods in Rangoon and the city of Moulmein, near the fighting with the Karens, has been substantially reduced over the past two years. A flow of black-market goods from Penang and Singapore has taken up part of the slack, but prices in some cases have more than doubled.

The Karens, in turn, have hit back at the government not only in Karen state, but in a recent spate of attacks on railway lines. Although the KNU has denied involvement, the blowing up of a Rangoon-Mandalay train in late July, in which a locomotive and six carriages packed with passengers were derailed and which left an officially estimated 67 Burmese civilians dead, is widely believed to have been carried out by the KNU. Because of the civilian death toll, the KNU leadership may have felt too embarrassed to admit responsibility for the attack.

The train was blown up near Toungoo, about 150 miles from Rangoon.

The area is inhabited mainly by Buddhist Karen who work as small farmers. Toungoo was at one stage held by Karen rebels shortly after they launched their separatist campaign in 1949.

The KNU have readily claimed they carried out two other attacks on trains in May and January, both on the Rangoon-Moulmein line. In the January incident, the train was partly derailed, but there were no casualties. In the May incident, the bombing was directed against a troop train heading towards the Karen battle area, and the KNU later said that while it would continue to hit the Burmese military, it would never harm innocent civilians.

Further north the BCP, once the main threat to the government and still estimated to have more than 12,000 armed fighters, has been far less active. Diplomats in Rangoon say the BCP, which was once active in wide areas of upper and central Burma, is now largely confined to an area east of the Salween river, near the Shan state border with Thailand.

The insurgents are known to be deeply involved in heroin production, and the area under their influence is one of the most lucrative for opium-poppo growing. One reason the BCP is having to resort to narcotics for revenue is that Peking apparently no longer gives it significant material support, though the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) maintains relations with the BCP as it does with other outlawed communist parties in Southeast Asia.

Sino-Burmese relations have improved substantially of late, with Burmese President San Yu visiting Peking last year, Chinese President Li Xian-

nian returning the visit in March and Burmese leader Ne Win travelling to Peking in his capacity as chairman of the ruling Burma Socialist Programme Party — which the CCP does not officially recognise — in May. Joint Burmese-Chinese teams are also cooperating in a programme to re-demarcate the remote border between the two countries.

While China appears to have stopped material support for the BCP, some diplomats in Rangoon believe that the insurgents are now receiving military supplies from the Soviet Union, via Laos, which also has a mutual border with Burma in the northern area of the country. If true, this would be a significant development posing a threat to China, which has always worried about the prospect of Soviet-influenced encirclement in its vulnerable southern underbelly. Other diplomats do not believe the Chinese would allow the BCP leadership, which still claims to be pro-Peking, to embark on such an adventure.

However, an indication that the Burmese Government may be considering such a possibility appeared in the *Working People's Daily*, a Rangoon-based party newspaper, on 9 July. An article on the BCP gave a veiled reference to the fear that the insurgent leadership is now changing horses. "The BCP, who had no proper master, are now looking for a new master," the article said.

It continued: "The master they are trying to follow is none other than a communist bureau formed with communist remnants from non-communist Southeast Asian nations. A big communist country is pulling the strings of this bureau." The reference to communist remnants might have been to the Communist Party of Thailand, which is pro-Peking, and therefore puzzling. But the communist master was obviously referring to the Soviet Union, or its major ally in Southeast Asia, Vietnam.

— Rodney Tasker

BURMA

Forgotten prisoners

For no crime except being there, Burma holds them for years

By Bertil Lintner in Bangkok

On 17 December last year, an unusual batch of repatriates arrived at Dhaka airport in Bangladesh. They were 56 Bengalis, many of whom had spent more than 20 years in Burmese jails for "illegal entry." On 20 January of this year, another group of 48 old men and women followed.

Among them was Nazir Ahmed, who was born in Bangladesh's Chittagong area in 1921. He had entered Burma in 1947, when both the then East Bengal and Burma were British colonies, to find seasonal work on one of the rice farms in Burma's Arakan area, as many other Bengalis did at that time.

Nazir Ahmed was arrested in 1957 following the introduction of the Foreigners Registration Act by the Burmese Government and sentenced to one month in jail for having no proof of residency. But he remained in the old, run-down Insein jail on the outskirts of Rangoon for 27 years until he was released

and sent back to his country which, during his absence, first had become East Pakistan and later Bangladesh.

There was also 94-year-old Aziz Rahman who was born in Anwara, Chittagong. He went to Burma as a child with his parents, who settled among the Muslim community in the Arakan capital of Akyab. Aziz Rahman was rounded up in 1957, also given a month's imprisonment, but has only just been released. As is the case apparently with many of these inmates in Insein, he suffered from depression.

Many have been less fortunate than those returned to Dhaka. Salima Khatun, from Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh, came to Burma with her father in 1938 when she was nine years old. Later, she married a man from Akyab and thus became a Burmese citizen. However, that did not prevent the immigration authorities from arresting her in 1959. Her case was even more paradoxical. Being

a Burmese citizen, she could not be sent back to Bangladesh. So she remains in the women's section of Insein together with numerous other Muslim women who are accused of being illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. Among inmates in the same prison are several women who were arrested with their infant children, who have grown up behind prison bars, where they remain.

Conditions in Insein are described by former prisoners as deplorable. Kim Gooi, a Bangkok-based Malaysian journalist who spent 10 months in Burmese prisons for illegally crossing the border from Mae Sai in northern Thailand to Tachilek in Burma in 1977, told this correspondent of stiflingly overcrowded cells, beatings by the prison warders and hard labour imposed on the inmates.

At least 14 elderly prisoners, all Muslims, charged with illegal entry, are reported to have died in Insein during the period from November 1983 to November 1984 from dysentery, diarrhoea, tuberculosis and other diseases related to their often decades-long imprisonment. The extremely hard conditions in Burmese jails, and the astonishing frequency with which short sentences result in decades-long stays,

would be cause for concern by any international standard. But reports from Burmese prisons tend to get even more Kafkaesque when it is obvious that maybe a third — or possibly an even higher proportion — of the people charged with illegal entry, mostly coming from Bangladesh, were actually

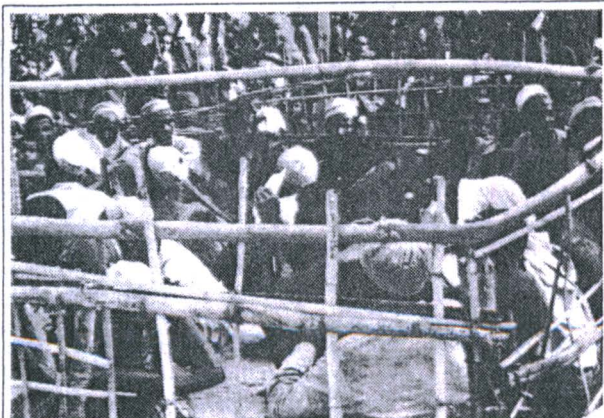
daughter in 1958. Azima Khatun and her daughter were born in Akyab and belonged to the indigenous Muslim community there. Azima Khatun is now 60 and her daughter Noor Jahan has spent 27 of her 29 years in prison.

The whole question of nationality and citizenship is a long-standing controversy in Burma's Arakan State, where the population is made up of a mixture of Muslims and Buddhists. The Buddhists have no problem, since their religion is considered proof of their indigenous ancestry. But the Muslim population has diverse roots. The indigenous Muslims, who now refer to themselves as Rohingyas, are often confused with the thousands of seasonal labourers, especially from the Chittagong

between the two groups and a crackdown on "illegal immigrants" in 1978 resulted in 200,000 people — most of whom were indigenous Rohingyas — fleeing to Bangladesh. The majority of them were, after international pressure, later allowed to return.

Several inmates in Insein, among them Nur Mohamed, 55, claim that their Burmese national registration cards had been confiscated by the authorities when they were arrested. Nur Mohamed was born in Balu-Khali in Maungdaw township of Arakan and now has spent 27 years in jail for "illegal entry."

Although these prisoners could not by international standards be described as political, the reason for their arrests may have political implications. Distrust of foreigners has long been an important element in extreme Burmese nationalism, as indeed in nationalist extremism elsewhere. In Burma, the Muslims in particular have been used as scapegoats to divert attention from internal social and economic woes. Anti-Muslim riots were reported in the Irrawaddy delta region and near Moulmein in June and July 1983 (REVIEW, 9 Feb. '84), when there were shortages of goods and food prices went up. **D**



Muslim returnees: alleged illegal entry.

born in Burma and not on the other side of the border.

A report made available to the REVIEW through unofficial channels lists one woman, Azima Khatun, who was arrested with her two-year-old

area, who came to work in Arakan during British colonial days and even after Burma's independence (REVIEW, 26 Apr. '84).

Burmese immigration authorities, however, seem to make no distinction

ARMIES

Fighting Many Foes

In the bustling backstreets of downtown Rangoon, safely insulated from the harsh realities of Burma's frontier wars, government campaigns to wipe insurgency from the political map arouse little obvious enthusiasm. For some, the response is a weary scepticism. "If they want to crush the insurgents, fine,"

shrugs one Chinese shopkeeper. "But tell me, where is the manpower? Where are the arms?"

That question cuts to the core of the problem facing the country's leaders. The state-run economy — propped up by a thriving and politically indispensable black market — is mired in declining export earnings, bureaucratic inefficiency and a long-standing political aversion to involvement with foreign capital. For military planners, the resultant low growth rates and dwindling foreign exchange reserves mean a chronic shortage of resources that could be translated into the military muscle and mobility needed to defeat insurgency. "They just don't have the money in the bank," says a Rangoon-based diplomat.

As it is, defence swallows up the lion's share of Burma's national budget. According to official figures, defence appropriations for the current (1985-86) fiscal year amount to \$228m., or 22.3% of the budget. (By comparison, agriculture and education take up 15.1% and 12.8% respectively.) Even so, the 163,000-man Burma Army operates on a shoestring.

Problems exist at most levels, not least weapons. Much equipment is of Korean War vintage with the standard service rifle, the German-designed G-3 — manufactured under licence by Burma's own Defence Services Industries — hardly more modern. Criticised for its weight and slow rate of fire, the 7.62-mm G-3 has long been a source of frustration among frontline troops facing insurgents armed with light M-16 armalites and Chinese assault rifles. There at least, however, relief may not be far off. Construction of new plant facilities to turn out a lighter 5.56-mm version of the G-3 is understood to have begun.

Staunchly non-aligned in its foreign policy, Rangoon has been wary of any military relationships with major powers that might help modernise its forces. Recent offers by India to assist in defence production were, not surprisingly, left politely in the air. The alternative has been to make purchases of weapons on the international arms market on a spot basis as foreign currency reserves permit. "They are plugging the gaps as they appear," notes one foreign analyst.

As startled tourists who have found themselves sharing commercial flights from the north with freshly wounded troops have discovered, military logistics & transport are also a major headache. Neither the army nor the tiny 7,500-man air force operates any large military transports. Helicopters,

viewed as crucial to modern counter-insurgency both as troops transports and gunships, play no effective role in Burma's wars. The country's minuscule fleet consists of some 25 U.S.- and French-built machines which are seldom risked in combat areas even for evacuation of the wounded.

At ground level rugged, jungle-clad terrain and a road system that has progressively deteriorated since Independence — particularly in insurgent-dominated areas — make movement difficult at the best of times and in the May-to-October wet season nightmarish if not impossible. Where the major roads end, troops are forced to rely on pack-animals and human power. The result is a constant need to press unenthusiastic locals into portering ammunition and food — at the expense of the crucial "hearts-&-minds" dimension of the conflict. The fact that porters are often killed in cross-fire does nothing to improve the situation.

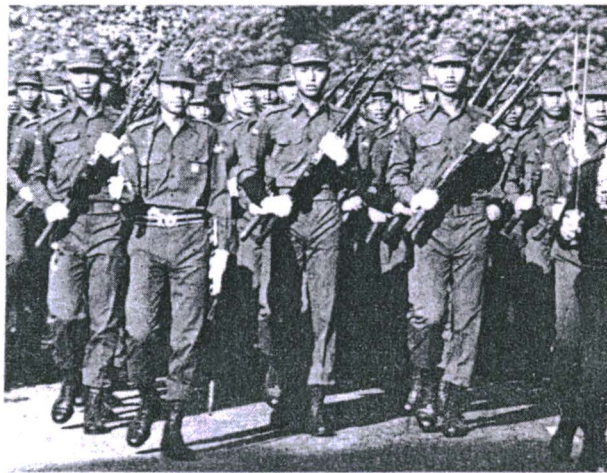
Simple shortage of manpower is another basic constraint in containing, let alone "annihilating," insurgents across the vast reaches of northern and eastern Burma. While legislation enabling a switch from today's volunteer force to national service conscription is already on the books if needed, financial factors seem to have set the limit at today's force levels. The Burma Army is composed predominantly of light infantry battalions backed by minimal artillery and air power. It also remains overwhelmingly Burmese: Karens are believed to account for some 5% of manpower, with Kachins and other minorities making up another 5%. No units are composed exclusively of minority troops.

Life for the average trooper, note analysts, is unquestionably tough — far more so than in most other Asian armies. Men sign on for five-year stints at a starting pay of 210 kyats (\$26 at official rate) per month. Casualty rates in "forward areas" are high and operational units may spend up to eight or nine months at a stretch away from home bases. Such conditions, some observers believe, help explain persistent reports of ill discipline and

mistreatment of civilians in minority areas.

Not surprisingly, despite official pronouncements lauding the armed forces and their sacrifices, the army is not widely regarded as a promising career. "There's no big rush to join up," says one Burmese source dryly. But for officer graduates of the Maymyo Defence Services Academy, while risks in the field are real, the rewards in a system where retired officers can expect to move into senior managerial and government posts are also readily apparent.

Under-equipped though it may be, when it comes to sheer stamina and tactical skill the Burma Army finds few detractors — even among its enemies. "As fighters they're not so bad," concedes one Kachin guerilla officer grudgingly. "They've had so much experience against our revolutions." But courage and experience only go so far. The sheer size of its operational area, the multiplicity of its guerilla opponents and its own shortage of resources mean that the Burma Army's campaign against insurgency is likely to remain what it has always been — a long, bitter war with no spectacular victories.



Burma Army soldiers: Operating on a shoestring

IN KAREN COUNTRY

Life Gets Tougher



Since its failure to overrun Karen bases along the Moei River borderline last year, the Burma Army has switched to a less costly but hardly less threatening attempt slowly to throttle its guerilla foe. Known in Burmese as "*Phyat Lay Phyat*," or the "Four Cuts," the strategy is aimed at severing the rebels from sources

of money, food, information and recruits. In themselves the "Cuts" are nothing new: they have been a basic plank of Rangoon's counter-insurgency program since government forces cleared the once rebel-infested Irrawaddy delta and Pegu Yoma range in the 1960s and early 70s. What is new is the determination and ruthlessness with which the knife is falling for the first time on the last redoubt of the Karen revolt — the triangle of country between the Salween and the Moei rivers (*see map*).

From the outset, the army's main thrust has been targeted on the Karens' primary source of revenue — taxation

roofs, shelved in the traditional style of Burmese pagodas.

The frontier vigil has had its costs. Supplies to Burmese forward positions at the end of tenuous lines of communication are often short, say Karen sources, while malaria exacts a steady toll. With medical evacuation for sick and wounded difficult, morale has inevitably suffered. "After Maethawa morale was high," notes Col. Maung Maung, commander of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). "Now it's a different story."

Even so, Burmese resolve to hang tough on the Moei is evidently having the desired effect. Taxation of trading that in 1980 netted the KNU a monthly income of 7m. kyat (\$875,000 at official rate) has now all but ceased. At Wangkha, where pre-offensive revenue stood at 100,000 kyats per day, camp commander Maj. Than Maung conceded bleakly that very few traders were still coming and that the situation was "much worse than last year." While some revenue from logging still seems to be trickling into Karen coffers, signs are the KNU is on its financial knees. "We have some funds from before and we get some help from refugees," shrugged one commander despondently.

Where the still-tense military stand-off has not deterred traders carrying goods from the border inland, Burmese troops have not hesitated to use more direct methods. In the



Photos: Asiaweek News Service

KNLA troops on patrol, Moei River; porters loading up with smuggled goods: Applying a strategy of the "Four Cuts"

of teak, gems and livestock smuggled into Thailand and of Thai consumer goods crossing the border the other way. But despite seizing only one of the main customs "gates" at Maethawa early last year, the army has dug in close to Karen enclaves with surprising tenacity, choking off trade and maintaining a springboard for future assaults. "They'll round up all our civilian supporters first and block our economic lines," said defence secretary Saw Gladstone of the Karen National Union (KNU) recently. "Then when we grow weak they'll make their big attack."

For the moment, however, the army is waiting. Opposite the embattled enclave of Mawpokay, which saw the heaviest fighting of 1984, Burmese troops, separated from Karen trenches by a mere 250 metres, have built more elaborate bunkers. At Wangkha to the south, once the most lucrative of Karen taxation points, government forces have pulled back 2-3 km but consolidated hilltop positions to continue sporadic shelling. But the most visible pointer to Rangoon's plans for the border is captured Maethawa, where troops have built new wooden houses complete with corrugated iron

area between the Karen base at Phalu and the Burmese town of Kawkareik, at least two massacres of unarmed porters have been reported. Maung Thein Zan, a 27-year-old ethnic Mon porter, told *Asiaweek* of an incident on June 22 as he and 14 others were carrying textiles from Phalu. Upon hearing gunshots, he said, the group hid in a clearing off the track, but were discovered by a group of about ten Burmese soldiers. "The soldiers came up to us and told us not to run away," said the Mon. "Then suddenly they opened fire and kept on firing on automatic." The porter, whose right arm was subsequently amputated, and a young companion, wounded in the arm, said they managed to escape into the jungle with one other man, while the rest of the group were killed on the spot. A second and similar incident is said to have occurred on July 2, at a traders' camp near Kawkareik. The alleged toll: fourteen traders shot dead.

With other reports of scattered shootings of traders, the evidence suggests that the Kawkareik slayings, if unusual in terms of the number of civilians gunned down, are

part of a general attempt to seal the border. Certainly, that is how the Karens see it. As one source put it: "They are trying to suppress us even by killing our traders. This is army policy." Policy or not, the killings have had an undeniable effect. "Burmese soldiers are still blocking the way," said one porter at Phalu, today all but deserted of civilians. "Traders don't dare come now."

If Rangoon's vice on the border is clearly tightening, the success of pacification west of the Dawna range is less easy to gauge. The relative quiet on the Moei has enabled the KNLA to bolster roving units inland with guerillas tied down last year in the defence of frontier bases. Reports from refugees — of whom there are now more than 12,000 in Thailand — and insurgent sources indicate that fighting has flared repeatedly as guerillas have turned on army posts and lines of supply with a fury born of desperation. The heaviest clashes are said to have taken place in KNLA-controlled areas around Pa-an and Papun, in some cases with use of air strikes by Burmese forces against Karen concentrations of battalion strength (300-400 men). Karen strategy appears to have focused on efforts to tie down Burmese troops in static defence of key communication lines behind the main area of operations.

In contrast to last year's large-scale border thrusts, Burma Army tactics have shifted this year to establishing battalion-sized operational bases and conducting smaller unit counter-insurgency operations around them. At the same time, say sources, there has been a major effort to assert control over a rural population that has traditionally tended to support the KNLA and serve as a guerilla recruiting base. Paralleling a continuing refugee exodus to the Thai border, the relocation of the population into major villages has moved ahead rapidly since late 1984 in a scheme reminiscent of the ill-fated, American-backed "strategic hamlet program" of the early 1960s in South Vietnam.

Interviews with villagers from Hlaingbwe and Pa-an districts revealed a pattern of army persuasion or coercion of peasants to move from outlying hamlets into larger villages or even towns, generally with army garrison. Tight control of movement in and out of the settlements has been facilitated by reinforced bamboo fences built by the villagers under army supervision.

Sketchy reports reaching Thailand suggest increasing resort to population relocation in insurgency-affected areas across northern and eastern Burma. But detailed accounts emerging from Karen State indicate that there, at least, the program is being implemented hastily and without adequate planning. "The Burmese wanted people to go and stay in places with their soldiers," recounted Ngo Gwa, a widow in her late forties from near Hlaingbwe. "No one was

happy about it. Then, when they arrived in Hlaingbwe, they found no food, so some ran off. Only those arrested stayed."

A long history of guerilla activity and repeated army forays into the area inevitably makes winning hearts & minds an uphill task. But Rangoon's declared political goals are consistently undermined by soldiers' pilfering of livestock, demands for liquor and abuse of women, recounted with monotonous regularity in refugee accounts. Press-gangng of male villagers for unpaid porter service — not uncommonly into combat areas — is also an abiding grievance in contested areas. Those who can afford it pay troops an "exemption fee" of 600 kyats to avoid the corvée, said sources.

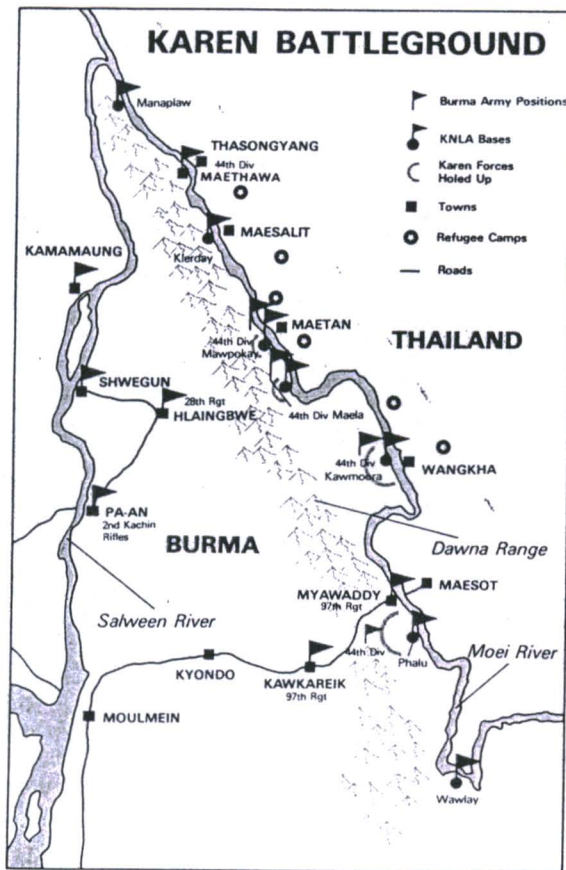
Nidawah, a 25-year-old farmer from a village near Hlaingbwe, arrived on the Thai border last month after one week's forced porter service. "Formerly the soldiers didn't give us much trouble," he said. "But since last year they've

become more cruel, and villagers don't dare stay." In a two-day period in May, he claimed, three villagers — two men in their thirties and a 16-year-old girl — had been shot in incidents with troops. Of a total of 300-400 families in the village, the young farmer estimated that more than 100 had departed.

Not surprisingly, efforts to wean villagers away from sympathy with the insurgents are proving less than successful. Da Doe, a 38-year-old farmer from a village 24 km from Hlaingbwe, told *Asiaweek* that after Burmese troops had moved into the settlement, a meeting was called and addressed by local people's council members and officials — "mostly Karen" — of the ruling Burma Socialist Program Party from the district centre. "They told us that Kawthoolei [the Karens' desired independent state] was finished and that the Kawthoolei soldiers were rebels who would slowly lose and that we should not support them," he said. "The villagers did not believe them because the Kawthoolei soldiers were frequently firing on Burmese army positions near the village." Even so, an awareness that the current

campaign has marked a seachange in government policy appears to be dawning. As one refugee put it: "The Burmese soldiers will never withdraw now unless the Kawthoolei soldiers disappear."

Rangoon, meanwhile, faces the long-term difficulties of transforming a heavy-fisted military occupation into a civil administration delivering tangible benefits to a distrustful rural population. Given the government's chronically limited resources, that is not going to be easy. As one Rangoon-based diplomat reflects: "They simply don't have the economic wherewithal to deliver any grand development scheme." For the villagers, that state of affairs may leave them with only party slogans, Burmese troops and unpaid porter service.



Asiaweek Map

DIPLOMACY

India Courts Its 'Quiet Neighbour'



Few Indian journalists paid much attention when State Minister for External Affairs Khurshid Alam Khan travelled to Rangoon for a three-day visit early in

July. Most were busy that weekend covering Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's first press conference since taking office. Unnoticed in Delhi, Khan's visit caused mild surprise among the Burmese, said a source in the Indian Foreign Office. His hosts repeatedly asked him where else he was visiting after leaving Rangoon. Said the source: "Khan had a lot of difficulty explaining to the Burmese that he had made the trip only to see them."

Why was Khan there? Neither the nature of the talks nor details of any agreement were provided by the Foreign Ministry in Delhi. While Khan is believed to have met President San Yu, Premier Maung Maung Kha and Foreign Minister Chit Hlaing, the only official Indian comment was that it was "purely a goodwill visit," that "talks were held in a very cordial atmosphere," and that they "concerned bilateral relations." Judged in the context of recent events, however, the trip appeared to some observers to be an attempt by India to move closer to Burma as China, Japan and even Pakistan show increasing interest in that country.

After years of self-imposed isolation under Ne Win, Burma has lately shown signs of opening its doors slightly. Rangoon has recently hosted a spate of visitors, and Burmese leaders have also been making frequent trips abroad. According to one analyst in India's Foreign Ministry, this could reflect a growing ascendancy in policy-making by the relatively outgoing San Yu. If Burma finally does decide to play a more prominent role in the region, said this source, India does not want to be left out of the action.

A number of factors have compelled India to seek strengthened ties with its eastern neighbour. For one, there have been problems on the Burma-India border along the state of Nagaland. The thickly wooded frontier represents India's soft underbelly; its green cover has enabled insurgents and smugglers to move at will. Of particular concern are rebel Naga groups, who have used their links with Burma's insurgent Kachin Independence Army (KIA) to obtain both guns and heroin from

across the border. In April the Burmese ambassador was summoned to the Foreign Ministry and strictly told to take steps to halt the smuggling. But India chose to keep the diplomatic incident quiet. An official spokesman even denied that the envoy had been called in. Said one ministry source: "Burma is still a rare quiet neighbour. We would not want to disturb our friendly ties with them in any way."



Minister Khan: Rangoon was surprised



Presidents Li & San Yu in Peking; Raising concern in Delhi

There are indications that Khan discussed the insurgency problem with the Burmese, who have succeeded to an extent in curtailing the KIA. One of Rangoon's measures: a strictly enforced policy of issuing rations only on production of identity cards, much the same way as the Malays tackled their communist insurgency between 1948 and 1960. Still, India remains concerned, especially after a recent clash on the border between Nagaland and Assam states, which Indian intelligence is probing for foreign links. Said a Burma hand in the ministry: "Kachin activity is

nowhere as serious as the insurgency in Shan State or by the Karen rebels, but we are watching the situation closely."

Perhaps an even more compelling reason for India's sudden interest in Burma has been China's rapprochement with Rangoon. Eyebrows were raised in the Indian Foreign Ministry last year when Burmese President San Yu visited Peking, followed several months later by a reciprocal trip to Rangoon by China's President Li Xiannian. Peking's implied recognition of the ruling Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) was unexpected, since Rangoon has accused China of funding the insurgent Burma Communist Party since the late 1960's. Two months ago, Ne Win made his first visit to Peking in his capacity as head of Rangoon's ruling party. (On previous trips he had been president.)

Indian analysts suspect that China may be seeking Burmese permission to operate nuclear-powered submarines in the area. The Chinese are keen to increase their presence in the Indian Ocean, said one source. Since Pakistan has been ruled out because of its proximity to the Soviet Union, Burma is the only other possibility for a submarine facility. Indian experts also speculate that China may be interested in Burma's vast mineral resources, especially non-ferrous metals. Burma is also said to have substantial quantities of molybdenum and natural uranium.

India might have overlooked China's overtures to Burma, said analysts, except that Pakistan has been putting out its own feelers to Rangoon. Pakistan President Zia-ul Haq was in Rangoon for three days in May, said to be the first such high-level contact between the two countries since Ne Win visited Pakistan in 1974. Said Zia at a state banquet hosted by President San Yu: "We have [both] been forthright in rejection of aggression or intervention, hegemony or domination." Some observers thought Zia's last words were meant to refer to India.

Analysts say Khan might also have tried to convince Burma to join the seven-nation South Asian Regional Cooperation forum, an invitation which Rangoon rejected when Foreign Minister Chit Hlaing visited Delhi last year. The forum, comprising India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives, will hold a summit later this year in Dhaka. Khan may also have sounded Burma on settling the India-Burma-China border issue. India has resented China's previous attempts to pressure Burma not to settle the nettlesome issue until the Sino-Indian frontier dispute is resolved.

INSIGHT...INSIGHT..

BURMA: Vijid Wongwain on the struggle for power

In Rangoon they're all looking out for No. 1

BURMA has since 1962, like Japan before the appearance of Perry's gunships on Tokyo Bay, been a closed kingdom, so to speak.

That year following the seizure of power, the Cromwellian Burmese leader, Ne Win, shuttered the country within a cocoon of silence and secrecy. Foreigners — embassy people, even UN officials, but especially journalists — were forbidden to travel within the country, and all materials pertaining to diffusion and exchange of ideas: books, magazines, newspapers, movies, even personal letters; were placed under strict censorship and control. Thus was Burma obscured from view, and the Burmese cut off from the rest of the world.

What the world in general knows about Burma, and the Burmese know of the world now stand in equal balance — one set of uneducated guesses, conjectures prejudices and misconceptions perfectly weighed against another.

This mutual ignorance, were Burma a tiny dot somewhere in the vastness of the Pacific, would be perfectly acceptable. Burma is anything but that, placed as it is between two mutually-suspicious Asian giants, India and China; and bordering a front-line ASEAN state.

Besides, according to UN and American figures, the Shan State of Burma produces 400 to 600 tons of opium a year, or if you like, 40 to 60 tons of pure heroin. Furthermore, the Burmese lacquer screen notwithstanding, Rangoon's troubles — a full-scale war, in fact — with the non-Burmese ethnic groups (Mon, Karen, Karenni, Shan or Thaiyai, Kachin and others), as well as with the CPB — Communist Party of Burma — are well known, and have been simmering for roughly 35 years. A potential world troublespot, if ever there was one.

Of late, however, there has appeared an additional factor: the growing frailty of Ne Win. No one knows what will happen after his passage into the next world, or what precisely is happening in Rangoon today although one cannot but be aware of the rumblings at the top.

The most obvious signs have been the recent removal of the Home Minister, Bo Ni, and the "resignation" of Tin Oo, reputed heir to and the "eyes and ears" of Ne Win, from the Council of State and People's Congress. Is this an indication of an intensifying succession struggle, a sign of forthcoming changes, or is it merely an old man venting his spleen on a previous favourite as in the case of Mao and ambitious Lin Biao? Or, on the other hand, does it perhaps indicate the final entry of Ne Win into dotage?

Byzantine

Very Byzantine it is all. In fact, the arena of power in Burma is precisely that. Since 1962, the year of the coup, Burmese politics of power have always been, speaking figuratively, a family affair, narrowly exclusive, centring on one man, General Ne Win. It can be said that he has ruled Burma as king in all but name and the trappings of royalty.

There are no ermine cloaks, or crown of gold, or gem-encrusted golden throne, but terms and titles that ring with egalitarian simplicity, such as Party Chairman, Council of State, Council of Ministers, People's Congress, People's Council, Party Cadre or Comrade Cadre, People's Representatives, and so on.

Theoretically, Burma is a Socialist Democracy where all power resides with the whole people exercised through the various people's councils (at village, township, division or state levels); and, giving life to these structures, and representing the will and the voice of the people, is the Party — the Burmese Way to Socialism Programme Party, or BWSP Party.

In practice however, since nothing in this world is, alas, ever perfect, all administrative and party posts are filled not by, as one would expect, "natural leaders" elected by their peers, but by army officers, active and retired. For instance, at township levels captains (either active or retired) would be in control of party as well as administrative affairs; majors or lieutenant-colonels at higher levels, and so forth.

Such a cosy arrangement is, however, complicated by the fact that like all armies with hands and feet mired in the tangle of power and politics, the Burmese military establishment is riven internally by factions contending for commanding heights, whose fortunes rise and fall with the stars of the men at the head of the chain.

Thus we had, soon after the coup, the rise of Brigadier Aung Gyi and his flock. Perhaps he threatened Ne

Win's position as Number One, so he fell, and with him went, all along the line, his followers.

Continued

Thereupon, there appeared several figures contending for the No. 2 position: Commodore Thaug Tin of the Navy, Thaug Dan of the Air Force, Brigadier Tin Pe and Colonel Saw Myint. As it happened, Tin Pe caught the ball, and became No. 2 and he purged his rivals and their followers from the structures of power. But by the late 1960s, another star arose to claim the No. 2 seat in the person of Brigadier San Yu, and so exited Tin Pe and his merry men from the scene.

In the early 1970s, a challenge was posed to San Yu (now a general) by the popular, it was said, General Tin Oo, the Defence Minister. But the general's trouble was that the key officers supporting him such as Captain Ohn Kyaw Myint, among others, wanted to return the army to the barracks. They thus plotted to do away with all the top incumbents, Ne Win included. The idealistic captain paid for the failure of this attempt with his life. The good general, however, was spared and allowed, like MacArthur and other old warhorses, to fade quietly away — after serving some time behind bars.

Newcomer

In the late 1970s, with Ne Win growing old and San Yu correspondingly becoming entrenched, Colonel Tin Oo, head of the MIS (Military Intelligence Service) faction and Ne Win's favourite, managed to clip San Yu's wings. Tun Lin and Than Sein, both holding Cabinet portfolios, were among the many belonging to San Yu's faction who were purged from positions of power, again, all along the line. In this, Col Tin Oo, it is presumed, enjoyed the support of the Defence Minister, Gen Kyaw Htin. Speculation was rife at the time that when the No. 1 finally relinquished power, Tin Oo would emerge as his replacement, with Gen Kyaw Htin as No. 2.

What is most significant in the recent fall from grace of Tin Oo and Bo Ni, the Home Minister, is that both have long been involved with the MIS, and are presumably the leading lights of this faction. Very puzzling too, as the MIS had been, even before the 1962 coup, Ne Win's sword and shield, as well as watchdog. In fact, the MIS was and has been the Burmese leader's main prop, a personal instrument existing solely to keep him in the saddle.

Diplomats in Rangoon and a handful of Burma-watchers are of the opinion, paradoxical as it may seem, that the MIS faction is the best bet for a liberal swing since its personnel by virtue of the privileges they enjoy — access to foreign publications, movies, television programmes, video cassettes, medical reports, etc; opportunities for foreign travel (for training purposes, health treatment, on various missions and even for holidays); and freedom to meet and mix with foreigners and diplomats — are, if not very broad-minded, then at least more knowledgeable of the out-

At any rate, MIS people are more sophisticated than head of state San Yu's adherents, party general secretary Aye Ko's stalwarts, or even the faction grouped round Gen Kyaw Htin, the Defence Minister — the majority of whom are either xenophobic nationalists or dogmatic party hacks, and at best, well-meaning but hopelessly-insular figures.

It is believed that the weakening, if

that is the case, of the MIS faction does not bode well for Burma. However, Burmese politics being these two decades, and in essence, a deadly and merciless struggle behind locked doors, and Burma a very complicated jigsaw with half the pieces missing, it is very difficult to predict which way the weathervane will turn. But Burmese astrologers have for several months been predicting, albeit in guarded and barely audible whispers, the rise of the CPB's star in Burma.

Such predictions would, say, two years ago have seemed pretty far-fetched. But, with the crumbling of the independent stance of various non-communist anti-Rangoon rebel movements due to the dual pressure of the CPB on one hand, and of Washington (stemming from the alleged involvement of these rebels in the opium and narcotics business) on the other hand — resulting in their falling into the CPB's arms (i.e. the Kachin Independence Army, the Shan State Army, Pa-O Liberation Army, the Palaung Liberation Organisation, Lahu National Liberation Army, the Wa National Army, Kokang Revolutionary Force, the Kayan Newland Army, within the past five or six years) — the CPB's position has improved considerably.

Militarily, it has gained more than 7,000 well-armed and experienced

jungle fighters. Politically as well, the CPB has made much headway at grassroots level following the collapse of the alternative nationalistic platforms espoused by non-communist rebels.

Burmese military sources, usually contemptuous of the CPB, are now expressing unease. Many senior military officers have privately admitted that the CPB now holds the military initiative, and is poised to spill over on to the Burmese plains. It is reported that CPB units are now active in their former strategic stronghold, the Pegu Yoma — less than 160 kilometres from Rangoon.

Whether the words of Burmese astrologers are just imaginative mumbo-jumbo, or whether the CPB is really on its way to winning a very long war, it is difficult as yet to say for sure.

However, one and only one thing is certain. That is, the war between Rangoon and the CPB is sure to grow in fury and scope, the implication of which for the Burmese situation will indeed be very serious. More so, when the jockeying for supremacy in Rangoon has begun in earnest, and will probably continue for many more months to come, lasting perhaps even years. One cannot help but wonder: will Burma after Ne Win take the road trodden by South Vietnam after Diem and Nhu?

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Khun Sa sitting at the head of his strong armed forces.

Warlords of the poppy fields

by

Vichai S.

WHENEVER there is mention of warlords, the usual mental reaction is to conjure up in one's mind the turbulent years in China following the fall of the Manchu right up to the planting of the Red flag over Tien-an Men Square. But of late, we have gradually been made aware that warlords — of the types abundant in the China of old — are alive and well in that unknown region hidden from prying eyes by the Burmese lacquer screen.

In fact, warlords have been ruling the roost in the 60,000 square miles of real estate known as the Shan State of Burma, or the Golden Triangle, for more than two decades. Although we are put to, or conditioned by movies and history books, to lump all warlords together and tar them all with the same brush as being cruel, exploitative, and predatory, it would not be entirely unprofitable to cast a more curious eye upon the newer breed — the warlords of Shan State.

In general, there are basically two types of warlords in this world. The first category being those we could term as institutionalised warlords. That is, a military commander or an army strongman in whose hands are concentrated all power of a political movement or the government and state. Such a type is not common in the anarchy-ridden and war-torn Shan State as in, let us say, far off Africa and Latin America.

The second type, a strongman commanding an army which exists and operates within a chaos of lawlessness and political upheaval — this category is more common and can further be sub-divided into four species.

The first species being the commander of an armed body of men serving the government, not paid in cash, but allowed to engage in trade and other commercial ventures which are prohibited to ordinary citizens. Such a warlord was Lo Hsing-Han, the so-called "king of drugs and opium," whose extradition to Burma in 1973 was hailed internationally as heralding the end of heroin and drug trafficking. (Incidentally, Lo is now back in his hometown of Lashio, Shan State, in command of a body of armed men, and is busy rebuilding his fortune through trade — whatever that means in a socialist country.)

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The second sub-type are those commanding armies recruited from among the native populace which actually, or claim to, fight for political aims. These warlords are similar to those Chinese warlords like Chu Teh and Ho Lung (before they joined the Red Army of Mao Tse-tung), and are as such, intimately involved with the administration, security, and political affairs of villages and towns under their jurisdiction. In Shan State such types would include Mohein of SURA (Shan United Revolutionary Army), Aung Kham of SNLO (Shan National Liberation Organisation), and to some extent, Khun Sa, and also in the Karen State, General Bo Mya.

The third sub-type are the lesser warlords commanding armies established along tribal lines such as "Phaya" Ja Erh (Lahu tribe), Bo Kang Sua and Maha Sang (Wa tribesmen), Ngain Lu-ta (Kayan tribe in Karenni State, now affiliated to CPB or Burmese Communist Party).

The fourth sub-type is interesting, and most complex in the sense that these warlords as well as the majority of officers are men without a country. The rank and file are mostly mercenaries with little sense of belonging, or loyalty, to tribe, village or country (stemming mainly from total ignorance, pure and simple, or due to hardship at home and other circumstances). Such warlords are the commanders of the ex-Kuomintang 3rd Army (General Li) and the 5th Army (General Lwi E-tien, who replaced the late General Tuan, the original commander).

The popular concept of warlords, abetted by Hollywood scriptwriters and the Hong Kong film industry, is that of powerful and mysterious, merciless men complete with secret vaults stacked high with glittering bars of gold obtained from drug trafficking and other adventures.

The truth, or reality is, however and alas, not as spectacular. Merciless and powerful some may be, but most are responsible men in the



Opium king Lo Hsing-Han in the Burmese jungle.

Warlordism as now exists in Shan State is a pretty sophisticated and complicated phenomena, and moreover integrally linked to not only the socio-economic and political imbalances and dislocations in Burma and Shan State, but also intimately connected to multinational and international finance, commerce and the movement of money and profit.

sense that it falls upon their shoulders to feed and clothe not only their armed followers, but also the dependents and families of subordinates. For example, General Li of the ex-Kuomintang 3rd Army is responsible for the basic needs of at least 8,000 - 10,000 souls. Let us suppose that one soul requires 10 baht daily to meet basic requirements. This would mean that the good General would have to dish out, or obtain 100,000 baht per day; or, three million baht monthly — not chicken feed by any standard. This figure does not include arms and ammunition, communication equipment, medicine, etc, and schooling for children of dependents. The 3rd Army would have to generate an income of not less than 80-100 million baht annually to stay in business.

QUESTION

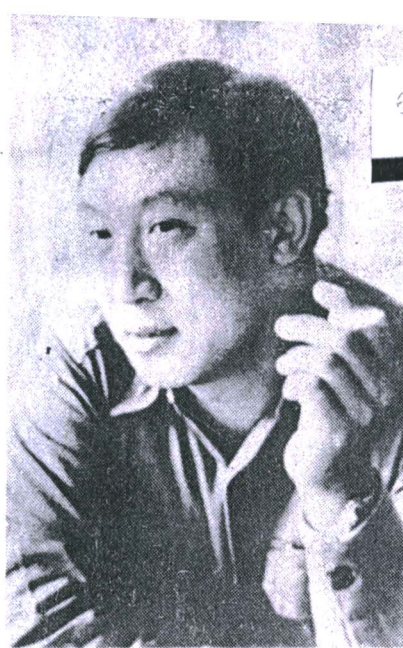
We therefore come to the next question — where does all the money come from?

For warlords who are natives of Shan State, the bulk of the fund comes from the levying of taxes and other fees on peasants (especially tax on opium fields), petty traders, sawmills, ricemills, plantations, buses and trucks plying the routes between towns in Shan State, distilleries and alcohol licensees, meat licensees, opium buyers or agents, contraband and drug caravans (very seldom as such caravans are under armed protection of other warlords), and so forth. However, the burden of native warlords is somewhat lightened by the fact that their followers are natives of

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Lao Su...his death doesn't mean the end to heroin smuggling.



Khun Sa...still very much in business.

the locality, and are hence able to live off the land, and moreover enjoy the support of local people.

As for non-native warlords (for instance, commanders of former Kuomintang forces), they are largely dependent on patron-clients — ie investors and monied men of many nations (Burma, Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc) who invest their capital in the cross-border contraband trade between Burma and Thailand; the jade and gems smuggling racket; and, most profitably, the opium and heroin business.

This category of warlords are dependent thus on commerce and trade for two reasons, basically. One, being Chinese by race it is natural for a mutually beneficial relationship to be established between these elements and the sprawling network of Chinese money and commerce spread all over Asia, especially Southeast Asia.

Secondly, being aliens in the Shan homeland, non-native warlords are unable to set up political and administrative infrastructures and thus are not able to levy taxes or impose various duties. To attempt such would result in conflict with not only the natives, established nationalist organisations and armies, native and tribal warlords, and the Burmese communist (CPB), but would also involve a high degree of political commitment, and consequently, frequent battles with the Burma Army which is essential if the support and confidence of the local populace is to be won.

The relationship between the non-native warlords and their patron-client is complex as well as absorbing. The former have access

to raw materials ie, opium, jade, ruby, sapphire, antiques and works of art from Burma, cattle, and so on), as well as the capability to provide protection against the Burma Army and Burmese authorities, Shan nationalists, native warlords, and other predators. The latter possess the dollars needed to finance the two-way contraband trade (consumer and other manufactured goods from Thailand and elsewhere; and jade, gems, and other merchandise from Burma and Shan State); and the lucrative drug trade; and most important, ready access to wide market covering Asia, and even markets in the United States and Europe.

EXISTENCE

It will therefore be seen that warlordism as now existing in Shan State is a pretty sophisticated and complicated phenomena, and moreover integrally linked to not only the socio-economic and political imbalances and dislocations in Burma and Shan State, but also intimately connected to multinational and international finance, commerce, and the movement of money and profit (which, incidentally, where it concerns the opium and heroin business, it is, as described recently by *Time* magazine, a US\$800 million industry).

Such being the facts of life, one could say when one reflects upon the war against drugs waged by international agencies and governments, that the direction taken which focuses attention exclusively on personalities — Lo Hsing-Han, Khun Sa, the lately deceased Lao Su, the hundreds of drug-carrying hippie tourists — could be likened to blaming cigarette smoking exclusively for incidence of all cancer. In fact, it would be far more sensible to war against the tobacco industry as a drive against cancer — however ridiculous it may seem — than underpinning the success of the anti-narcotics war on the elimination of one or two warlords.

The statement often heard which maintains that the opium and heroin problem will always be with us because it benefits besides drug financiers and traffickers, the multinational and international bureaucracies and bureaucrats as well — is for all its shocking cynicism, obviously not too far off the mark judging from the way the hunt for the solution to the opium and heroin problem is going.

Heroin and warlordism are, if one cares to accept facts and objective realities, but by-products of very serious and deeply-rooted socio-economic and political disintegration and dislocations afflicting Burma, particularly Shan State, for more than 20 years, and of which no study or research has been carried out by any one.

The usual excuse, or reason (for the sake of politeness), given by scholars, various experts, governments, and even the UN, for this sorry omission, for the lack of any knowledge of the cogs and wheels of opium and heroin, or the realities of human existence inside Burma (particularly in areas where opium has become the only viable crop), is that the host government is allergic to foreign presence and particularly sensitive to "interference".

Until the time comes when a modus operandi can satisfactorily be worked out between the Government of Burma on one hand, and the international community and the UN on the other, which will enable all concerned to solve the problem of opium growing areas in Burma, we must rest content with ignoring the miserable plight of the real victims of opium and warlordism — the millions of poor and exploited peasants of Shan State and just as numerous drug crazed addicts the world over. And in the meantime, we can look forward to being entertained for quite a long time with exciting headlines about warlords and gruesome pictures of dead traffickers.

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